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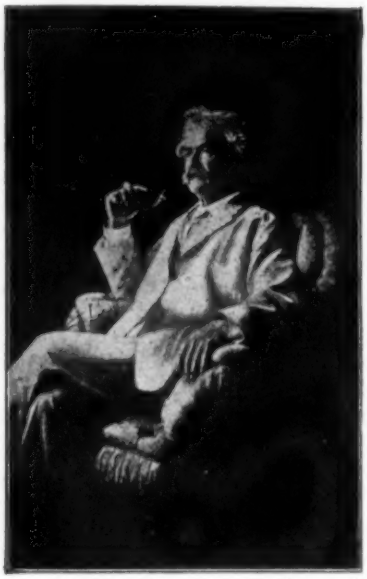

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The Master of Whitby*

BY EDWARD STRATTON HOLLOWAY

had heard tales enough of Whitby Hall and its master to excite a curiosity much more lukewarm than my own, so that when Sir Hubert asked me to pay him a visit I lost no time in accepting the invitation.

Despite the fact that I was an American by birth,—or perhaps because of it,—that he had taken a fancy to me while I was doing his portrait seemed undeniable. Not only had I "got" him for the portrait, but in a measure I had got *him*. As he himself put it: "Dane, I don't know which to admire most, the sweep of those big brushes of yours or the way you lay on with the broadsword." For myself, I shrewdly suspected that it was the latter which had captured him. I admit that he could tire me out, but for a half hour or so I could meet him with blow and strategy, and he was greatly "tickled" to have found even a partial antagonist. I fancy they must have been rare, not only from the unusualness of the weapon, to say nothing of its barbarity for civilized men, but because of the endurance of the man's muscles and the demonic quickness of his eye.

"I understand," he said, "that you are going to Percival's on Thursday for a fortnight's shooting. Well, come to Whitby on Wednesday; stay overnight,—that will be enough for you,— and

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I'll have you driven over on Thursday. And see to it that you don't shoot yourself on Friday."

I laughed and asked: "Why?"

"Because that's what Denton did."

"Why?" I inquired again.

"Oh, the charm of the place, doubtless. But he was a weak-headed chap, poet, you know, and had too much undiluted imagination. I had no business to take him out there. You're a hard-headed, hard-fisted sort of a devil for a painter, so I fancy you'll survive."

I bowed appreciation of the doubtful compliment and decided on the train by which I was to travel. This is perhaps as appropriate a place as any to own that Whitby itself was not the only magnet which drew me thither. I had known Constance, Sir Hubert's only daughter, in London and had more than once danced with her. She was now at Whitby; had been practically immured there for a year, rumor said. I wanted to know why and I wished to see her.

And then, Sir Hubert had said: "Your portrait of me is good enough to hang by *the* portrait. I want you to see them together." He had remarked it with the same smile I had caught for the canvas and I knew that things were "doing." As to *the* portrait, I did not need to inquire. It was that and the strangeness connected with it which had made Whitby famous—notorious is perhaps the better word. The portrait was that of Sir Mark, (the Hammer, the name signifies), the first baronet, and who, by some unusual influence, was still master of Whitby Hall. I was to see the portrait, experience it. I asked no more.

As Sir Hubert left the studio he looked over his shoulder and said: "I'll tell Saul to approach the Hall from the West. That will give you the proper atmosphere of Whitby." He smiled again and was gone.

I alighted from the train at a small station lost among the moors. It was nearing sunset and a streak of lemon-yellow broke through the dun clouds and flashed an instant upon the long line of rails by which I had come. A few birds screamed and sought their nests, and then there was complete quiet.

A solitary trap awaited me. Saul respectfully approached, gathered together my luggage, and we embarked on our drive toward Whitby. I soon found him as drearily silent as his illustrious prototype when without David and his harp, and the air was as chill as he. After the roar of London the entire peace appealed to me, however, and I leaned back, comfortably smoking, as we

whirled over a road smooth as a cement floor and as straight as a bird's flight. It added another nick to my score of admiration for Sir Hubert's qualities, for I doubt if such another road through such a country exists in England.

Presently I asked how far Whitby lay ahead, when Saul, with a touch of his hat, indicated by his whip a rise of ground surmounted by a house so low and rambling that at first it had escaped my notice. As we neared the Hall, however, I found it more imposing than I had imagined. We seemed to encircle it on our way, but it was not till I espied what at first looked among the thick foliage like sheeted ghosts that I remembered its owner's words. It had pleased him to introduce me to Whitby through its graveyard. That was its "proper atmosphere." I smiled. Did he, after all, take me for a babe, or had he indulged in a grim joke at the expense of Whitby?

But once inside I was warmly welcomed. My host greeted me with the hearty hand clasp which I liked in him, and a bed of embers in the wide fireplace gave a heat very grateful after the crisp air from which I had come.

"I'll mix you some of the brew of my forefathers," Sir Hubert said. " No one knows its secret but myself and, as I have no son, it will die with me, unless my daughter marries, and then—perhaps. It depends. It's a potent drink and stirs the blood. By the way, I hear you know my daughter. She'll join us soon. Meanwhile—"

He continued his brew, chatting easily. It seemed an occult process, with his group of decanters and stone vessels of strange shapes before him on the Tudor board of oak, an urn of hissing water at his hand, the candles about the walls lambent in their sockets. He poured the steaming drink and I found it a fiery yet mellifluous draught, smooth upon the palate yet tingling as it went down. The glass was at my lips as we both turned at the rustle of a woman's gown.

"Ah, Constance, I believe you know our guest."

I set down my glass. It was well he had mentioned his daughter's name; otherwise I should not at once have known her. I stepped forward and met her outstretched hand and the smile which, except for its present weariness, I remembered. Her sprightliness was gone, her silken gown clung about a figure so frail that when I remembered the slender firmness my arm had encircled in the dance, it's pitifulness went to my heart! What did it mean!

She must have discerned the shock her appearance gave me be-

cause for a few minutes she took the conversation upon herself while I recovered at least my outward equilibrium. A little later a servant entered with a message and Sir Hubert excused himself for a moment, leaving us alone.

There seemed little to say without saying too much. Her changed condition stood between us. She glanced above my head.

"Your portrait of my father is wonderful but I can't say that I like it."

I turned and looked up quickly. I had not known that it hung there in the hall. Crossing over, I took a seat on the long couch where she sat and which I saw would give the best view of the portrait.

"Isn't it the truth I've painted?" I asked.

"You certainly have not flattered."

"I don't flatter."

"I admitted it was wonderful," she sighed, uneasily.

I quite understood her disquiet. As I have said, I had "got" Sir Hubert, and the revelation of the man on the canvas had been disturbing to his daughter.

Then, turning slightly, I saw *the* portrait—and forgot my own. I started to my feet and stood beneath it. In this face was all the evil of which but the potentiality existed in Sir Hubert. My host had abundant capabilities of evil, should he let himself go. This other had gone.

So sinister was the face that even I shivered while I admired the wonder of the work. I turned toward the girl. She had cowered in the corner of the couch.

"He—is—here!" she said hoarsely.

I looked about me but nothing was to be seen. There was no need of vulgar seeing, one had but to feel. My flesh crept. Every tiny hair on my body seemed to rise. An icy wind swept over my skin; it penetrated, numbly, horribly, creating the sensations as of minute points of piercing cold. No other cold was like this. It was death, the grave.

I sat down by the cowering girl. "It's horrible, but don't be afraid," I said soothingly.

Her eyes opened in wonder. "Are not you?"

"Afraid? No! I loathe him—it—whatever he is. If he weren't already dead I could kill him now. I'd like the chance!"

"Hush!" she said. "You don't know—how terrible he is."

"He's a devil!" I broke out.

"Worse than that," she answered gravely. "He's a lost soul."

Her terror was pitiful. Despite all her maidenliness, it edged her toward me as toward one who was at least alive, wholesome, free of the taint of death. "I understand—fully," I said, placing my firm hand over hers. "But he can do nothing. I defy him!"

"He can. You do not know—yet."

I heard a footstep and withdrew my hand as Sir Hubert entered. His daughter rose.

"He is here," she said, and passed out.

"He is here!" There was exultation in his voice. His hands rubbed together. "He is here." He caught my arm and led me to the portrait. It was of course unchanged. Writers of fiction indulge in such flights of fancy as eyes animated by spiritual possession, but from fact I can now deny their truth.

My host laughed in high good humor. "Well," he said, "you've experienced just a touch of the charm of Whitby. We'll see more of this later. You'll feel better after a good dinner. Come on."

At table I caught another view of Sir Hubert, the polished, fascinating man of the world, seated at his own board, his conversation full of a lambent irony as we chatted of the world of London we all knew so well. And his daughter, with that amazing adaptability of woman, at which we can only marvel and admire, had for the time put by all her fear and was as brilliant as he, but her spirit I soon saw was as gentle as his was mordant. There was humor, there was wit—how could there help but be at the antics of some the world knows well?—but never was there unkindness. We sat long at the table over coffee and cigarettes after the cloth was cleared.

When at last we rose and Constance retired, Sir Hubert and I stood once again before the portrait with a night-cap of "the brew" in each our hands. The "influence" for the time had passed. "You'll sleep well," he laughed, " the Presence is never felt beyond that door."

At this I looked curiously about me. The great hall was set out beyond the remainder of the edifice. "That door"—a wide arch, rather, hung with portieres—led into the inner hall from which rose the stairway and opened the passages to the rest of the building, but I could perceive no reason why the Presence could not enter it. I turned back and nodded toward the picture.

"You haven't told me who painted it."

"It's not generally known, but I'll tell you"—he named the artist.

"I thought I couldn't be mistaken. It's freer than usual, has more

fire, but it's *his* and the best he ever did. A second Holbein I've always considered him, who might have surpassed his master—I'm not sure he hasn't done it here—if it had not been for his untimely taking off. He killed himself, you know, but *why*, nobody knows."

"I know."

I whirled upon him, startled. But my host's face was inscrutable, the question died on my lips. Instead, I said:

"A man might have sold his soul to paint a portrait like that."

"He did."

I stood in silence, the candles on the table, the hall half-shadow, a sighing wind outside. These things seemed but impertinent accessories after the tragedy of the past and that of the present—the Presence and its influence on the beautiful woman who, beneath it, was fading into her grave.

"Why is it?"I broke out. "Is there something in the presentment of a person, or at least in such a presentment of such a person, which makes it possible for him to make his presence felt?"

But my host laughed. "Oh, philosophize all you like; it's too recondite for me, and I don't greatly care. He's *here*, that's the point, that's all I care to know. He's here—or was. You don't care to deny that, do you?"

"D—n it, no," I answered shortly. "Let's get to bed."

The next morning I was driven over to the Percivals by the sad-faced Saul, but on my arrival was welcomed cheerily.

"Jolly good thing you came to sweep away the cobwebs," said Percival. "Did you see me jump like an old woman when you arrived in the Whitby trap?"

"It was rather startling," added his wife. "They have so few visitors, and to think you should have been one of them."

I explained that I had painted Sir Hubert's portrait and had been to view it.

My hosts were whole-souled people with whom I felt greatly at home, and as Percival and I sat smoking after luncheon I soon led the conversation to Whitby and its history. At the mention of Sir Mark he shook his head.

"Our families have lived here but a few miles apart since his time," he said, " and of course we know something of them. Sir Mark was, as you Americans say, a very lively customer. He conspired against the King who gave him his title. Privateering was too modest for his vein and they not only say that ships owned by him

carried the black flag but that, disguised, he himself often trod their decks, made his captives walk the plank, and brought home a store of gold and women. His infidelities put his wife in her grave—"

" 'Old wives' tales' " I objected. "Why, man, either of those tricks would have hung him."

"If he'd been caught, yes. But his amazing effrontery, or luck, or ingenuity, or all of them, saved him. Somehow things could never be fastened upon him, though he had several narrow escapes. There are all sorts of stories about his death. Some said that he took his own life, some that he was killed in a brawl over a captive woman—either is entirely likely."

"I suppose Sir Hubert knows?"

"Doubtless, but it is entirely unlikely that he will dispel the mystery. All this romance about his house and family is the breath of life to him. If it didn't exist, I don't doubt he'd give people occasion to talk about himself—there has been talk already and he's quite capable of causing more—but of course that sort of thing lacks the glamour of the past."

I nodded. "I've heard of some of his escapades."

"There's no romancing about one matter," Percival said solemnly, "It's a bare, cold fact; a strange and an awful thing: the number of deaths connected with that house through the course of years. Not of the family, they've always been long-lived, but of others, both friends and strangers, who have been there. The deaths have not occurred in the house itself—there's something of devilish suggestion about that—but afterward; a day or two or a week even—found dead; poison, the pistol or the knife, always violence and always mystery. One might think that no one would visit the house, but you know human nature; they would go there by scores if they could. I'm bound to do the family justice and say that very few get the opportunity."

I must own that Percival's story made its impression. To my questions, he answered that of course the tragedies had, after all, happened only at long intervals, but that when the total score was counted up—he again shook his head.

"All their men have been devils," he went on. "It's in the blood, or in the sway Sir Mark still holds. But—and it's a strange thing, too, the women of the house have been angels; among the sweetest and purest women the country has known. They have redeemed the race."

I thought of Constance and my spirit warmed. If I had sought

a week for words I could not have valued her more accurately.

Not long after our talk a sudden thought came to me. "Percival," I said, "you've got a good library here. Have you, by chance, a history of English Art, or a biographical dictionary, or anything of that kind?"

"Maybe this will do."

I found what I wanted.

"Now the county history."

This was readily producible.

Presently I closed the book.

Percival was about to question me, but seeing my face forbore.

The painter of the portrait at Whitby had died by his own hand three days later than the man he painted!

For the sake of my kind entertainers I endeavored to put away my anxiety and throw myself into the enjoyment and good fellowship they had provided, but on the second afternoon, when the sport was flat and the birds did not rise, I borrowed a trap from Percival, left him wondering, and drove over to Whitby.

Notwithstanding its owner's absorption in the place, I fancy that he found residence there rather dull at times and I received a hearty welcome with an expressed hope, when I left, that I would come over as often as I could make it convenient. My talk was of course general to them both but there were a few moments when I was alone with the daughter of the house. I made no reference to our experience of a few evenings previous but left an opening for her to speak if she cared to do so. She did not avail herself of the opportunity and my mind was not greatly relieved as to her condition. Though grown so slender, she seemed physically well, but there was a sad sweetness in her manner, a patient endurance, which alternately troubled me for her sake and filled me with indignation for its cause.

During the next fortnight I was often at Whitby, the Percivals, in their courteous kindness, making no remarks but, I could discern, growing more uneasy at each visit. It was not right to leave these good friends in ignorance and anxiety, though I did not feel I could speak plainly, so one day before leaving I said as lightly as I could:

"Yes, I've felt the ghost of Whitby Hall (you feel him and don't see him, you know) and I'm not afraid of him—for myself. I *am* afraid of him for some one else."

"Constance!" Both exclaimed at once.

"Yes."

"She's a dear and wonderful girl," said my hostess. "I don't wonder at your interest."

"It's sincere," I answered as I took the reins.

So sincere it was that I do not hope to explain how deeply it was involved—for she had spoken.

"I must talk to you," she had said three days before. "I'm glad to, if you will listen to me, for you've been so kind, never saying a word but being with me as often as you could when you saw I was in trouble and there was no one else—so that I've felt you back of me, as it were."

"I'm with you," I said simply.

"I avoid this hall as much as possible," she went on speaking, "but as it has always been the living and receiving room it is difficult to do so always. I am afraid. You understand part—not all. It's not only fear of *him*—he's trying to *influence* me!"

"What!" I was on my feet.

"And of course influence me to evil."

I could not speak. Percival's words came back and rang in my ears: "The sweetest and purest women the country has known." That Constance was, that she always would be, what then—? The question came to my dry lips:

"Influence you to what?"

"That I shall know soon. I don't know—yet. But it is coming. The knowledge seems just beyond,flickering just outside my consciousness. And when it comes—"

"And your father exposes you to this!" My deep-seated grievance broke out.

"He simply will not believe. 'Not in all these years,' he says, 'has the Presence ever touched a member of the family.' I believe that is true—till now. I do not understand—whether with the lapse of time the spirit is growing still more evil—I do not know. But I feel his power, it's terrible. He is trying to grasp my will. Sometimes I hardly seem to be myself, I'm wandering afar off, at his mercy.

"But my father will not even listen. 'It's nonsense!' he broke out in anger. 'I tell you he has left his race unharmed. It's the workings of your miserable imagination!' He's ashamed of me, that the daughter of a line of ancestors famous for their daring, should be so weak and cowardly. And I can't explain, you see, because it's not tangible, it's all inward—and therefore all the more real!"

"But he's experienced the Presence, himself!" I protested.

"Of course but—he glories in it. 'The master of Whitby is with us yet!' he exclaims. 'He's the master, not I. *He* built the hall, *he* rules here still! Other houses have their so-called spirits, uncertain, doubtful; there's no doubt *here*—too many have experienced him—and never forgot!' Good or evil, father does not care. It's a *distinction*, something of a kind which exists nowhere else, unique."

So she had spoken! Certain circumstances which I could not overcome had made a visit to Whitby impossible for two days and I was consumed with anxiety. The influence, her temptation, had never left my mind. And when, on the third day, I was finally on the road, I drove furiously.

A few hours later I traveled the same road homeward. I had secured but a moment's conversation with her.

"I know—now," she told me, "what he wants me to do. No, you can do nothing but stand by me as well as one can by another, and remember me in your prayers—if you say them."

"I shall now," I assured her.

She would not tell me further. "I must fight him, alone," she said solemnly. She seemed quiet, contained, and on a higher spiritual plane than I. Not knowing what to propose, and having no opportunity of another word with her alone, I was distracted with my helplessness.

The more my anxious thought dwelt upon it the more I was convinced that the explanation which Sir Hubert had ridiculed as my philosophizing was correct—that it was the wonderful likeness of Sir Mark, produced under the conditions now revealed, which enabled the Presence to evince itself with such power. I found myself considering—if no better plan presented— the actual destruction of the portrait in Sir Hubert's house, at whatever cost, so that his daughter might be saved.

On returning to the Percivals my condition of solicitude was too evident to be hidden and I frankly told my hosts that while I could not fully explain, Constance was suffering from the influence of the house and I was seriously alarmed. These good people met me with the heartiest sympathy and put themselves quite at my service in case they could be of help.

Fortunately I had an excuse for another visit to Whitby. I had noticed that my portrait of Sir Hubert had dried in somewhat and told him that I would bring over some retouching varnish the next

day and apply it. I did not know what he thought of my frequent presence at his house and, in my distraction,I did not greatly care, beyond an ordinary desire to keep the peace.

Not experiencing the Presence after that first evening, I had once casually inquired how often it manifested itself and was told that it did so almost every evening but that my subsequent visits having been in the day time I had naturally though accidentally avoided it. I therefore timed my next visit to arrive somewhat after dinner.

As I discovered that Sir Hubert's cordiality was on the wane, I got at once to work. I retouched the picture with great care, while they watched me with attention, but this of course occupied but a short time. Strolling about a moment, I made some inquiry as to the collection of weapons on the wall of the inner hall, just within the archway, and secured his interest.

"I'm glad you mentioned them," he said, "for one of the hilts is loose and needs repairing. They are rather an interesting lot, but mostly in a personal way. This one, however, goes back long before our time—a crusader's sword, it was. On that famous July day, when Jerusalem was wrested from the hand of the infidel, he carried it and laid it on the sepulchre of Christ. The unusual form of the cross-shaped hilt backs up the tradition."

He took down half a dozen of the other weapons and laid them on the table in the outer hall.

"This was Sir Wilfred's sword—see, it's loose here; this a Venetian dagger with no particular story—I merely picked it up because of its fascinating workmanship."

He went on with their histories but I was not thinking of them. My mind was upon what he had said of the sword of the crusader, still hanging in the inner hall. Could it, by any chance,be because of *that* that the Presence was unable to pass beyond "that door."

But I caught his last words: "Sir Mark's sword I always keep in my own room. I will fetch it."

Was it the mention of the name? Sir Hubert, on his way out, turned and smiled with gratification, for instantly the Presence had come. It created the same tingling of the flesh, the insupportable chill, my loathing and wrath. I wheeled toward the portrait, and then I turned toward Constance.

Her eyes were upon me, dull, secretive, as under a spell. Her fingers crept inch by inch across the table. Beyond them the dagger lay. I spoke to her. She did not heed, but always her fingers crept forward, always she watched me lest I should hinder her.

Would she kill me? I was beyond her reach. And then I understood! *Suicide!* It was to that he had incited others.

I leaped forward and flung the dagger into the corner of the hall. And then, in a horror of wrath, I caught the crusader's sword from its rest. With the cross of the hilt I smote the portrait across the face and cried: "In the name of God leave this house and do not return!"

"What have you done?" Sir Hubert stood in the doorway. But his daughter's voice cried out in joy: "He's gone, he's gone!"

"Yes, he's gone," said the owner of Whitby, "and you come here and abuse my hospitality, destroy the honor of my house—"

"Wait, Sir Hubert. Do you see that dagger there? Your daughter was about to kill herself under the sway of that abominable Presence."

"Abominable! Ah, he was a *man*—of blood and of passion, who did as he saw fit. Little *he* recked of life and death, of others or his own—so little that when he was done with life he chose death. But it couldn't quench his spirit. He's ruled here all these years, king in his own house, till you, *you* with your miserable cant— As for my daughter! The sickening imagination of a weak girl, backed, I see now, by the ecclesiastical flights of fancy of—a dauber of paint! Ha, ha!"

But I faced him easily. "He has gone, and, for all your scorn, inwardly you are as convinced as I that he will not return. As for your words, I would not take them from another as you well know. *You* may add thief to them if you like, for I'm going to take your daughter, if she'll come with me, whether you like it or not, and by the Almighty I'll take better care of her, too, than you have done this past year. Constance, will you choose?"

She came to me and we stood facing him, my arm about her shoulders.

"What do you say Sir Hubert?" I demanded.

For an instant he was beyond words with wrath. But we stood firm. Then I said, quietly:

"Constance, get your wraps. It's cold."

"Where are you taking her?"

"To Percival's."

He broke into a strident laugh. "There is no need. Do you think I shall set foot in Whitby again—the Whitby you cravens have spoiled! Get done with your marrying—and set up a dovecote here. Here! Ha, Ha! Great God! Here!"

He was as good as his word. The marriage took place by special license the next day. He gave away his daughter with the mordant irony of the polished man of the world. We saw no more of him for three years, but London heard much of his wild exploits in the wild South Seas.

Then he came back, bronzed, handsomer, more fascinating than before. He has never gone to Whitby, but he sometimes sees us, at our London house. We are treated to the same finished sarcasm, and he has never communicated to me the secret of the brew of his forefathers. Whereby I know that he has not forgiven me.

A Woman or an Owl*

BY LEONARD R. JENKINS

"WHERE does old man Beamis live?"

The Oakdale lounger, to whom I put this rather idle question, was noticeably startled. He moved away from the telephone pole against which he was leaning and glanced around furtively as if expecting Beamis, or somebody else, to make a grasp for his throat.

"Why, where is he?" he asked.

"About three blocks up Main Street," I replied, "but his cayuse is headed this way."

The man shaded his eyes with his hand and scanned the street to make certain that I had not underestimated the distance.

"Yes, that's him," he announced, conclusively; and thereupon took occasion to put the huge telephone pole between himself and the coming Beamis.

"Me and Beamis," he explained, evidently observing my puzzled smile, "Beamis and me never bother puttin' off much time with one another."

"I am not much acquainted with Mr. Beamis," I informed the man behind the pole, "but I received a message from him this morning to the effect that he wishes to call upon me sometime today—"

"The old rooster!" snorted the man from behind his pole-breastworks, "I bet it's true about him tryin' to git married."

Beamis dismounted some two blocks up the street and hitched his pony to a convenient rack. The man behind the telephone pole breathed freer and became more talkative.

"You ain't no ways particular about knowin' where Old Beamis lives?" he began.

"Not a bit," I assured him. "It was a very idle question."

"Glad of it," he nodded, relieved, "for we old-timers here don't make a practice of telling strangers about where Beamis lives,

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and, if I was you, I wouldn't bother asking many questions about it. Beamis might misunderstand, you bein' a stranger. And he is terribly foolish about that queer roost of his."

"Must be," I agreed, more puzzled; "but why do you people call him 'Old Tree'?"

"Who? Me? I didn't do it—never!" The man cast around as if getting ready for a foot race; but my hearty laugh held him, at least for a moment.

"Did anybody say that I called him 'Old Tree'?" This question was put almost defiantly.

"Calm yourself," I begged him. "I am not trying to trap you."

"But I can't tell you why *they* call him 'Old Tree'," he whispered, "it's a secret."

I bade the daft villager a doubtful good-day and walked away.

"Hold on!" The man followed me to explain: "No offence meant, none at all; but that Beamis lives in about the oddest house as ever was. A stranger can't help laughing, and Beamis won't have it even smiled at. So we old-timers don't make a practice of sending strangers out there. Beamis wouldn't thank us. Not so long ago some tourists went out there to see his roost, and when they grinned, Beamis lit in and licked the whole bunch. No, me and Beamis has a difference—and don't speak."

While the villager was still talking, I glanced down the street and saw Mr. Beamis approaching, astride his small pony. It was not hard to believe that he "licked the whole bunch." He was huge rather than big, and his thick wavy hair and whiskers were like a leonine mane. But his eye was not that of a fierce man. He rode as if at peace with himself and the whole world.

"And he's wantin' to git married," said the villager, speaking to himself, "but no woman will ever live—"

But that sentence was never finished. The speaker looked up and saw Beamis not more than a hundred yards away, which was a sign, I suppose, to that particular villager to seek the protection of a kindly telephone pole. He left me to draw my own conclusions, but as for him—he disappeared.

It was about two hours later in the day that a visitor, unannounced, opened my study door, nodded to me, removed his big hat gingerly, and walked in. So trimmed and brushed, collared and cuffed in spotless linen, was my visitor that I did not at a glance recognize him.

"Beamis," said he, thus with the one word introducing himself

to me. I had already observed the fact that people did not call him "Old Tree" except in his absence.

"Have this chair, Mr. Beamis," I begged, indicating the largest one in the room.

"No," he answered decidedly, "the train'll be in shortly now, and I'm calculatin' *she'll* be on it. Here's the papers. You'll marry us right in here, when I fetch her over?"

Just then the incoming express whistled shrilly, and Mr. Beamis made a dash for his shining new run-about and uncombed pony, which were secured across the street. And away they went to the station, the pony showing too plainly that the shaft against his side was a gallingly new experience.

In less than due time the clattering hoofs of the awkward pony announced that Mr. Beamis was returning. He had calculated rightly. She had arrived!

"Maria Watts," proclaimed Beamis, looking over her shoulder and pushing the woman into my study none too gently; "it's her!"

Maria Watts was light, tall, angular, and forty-five, perhaps; but not altogether unhandsome. She was neatly attired in a grey travelling suit, and had the general appearance of a woman who lives in the city and studies the fashion sheets. She looked capable.

"Ready," spoke Tree Beamis with a solemn goneness of voice, "and no use of making your say too long—the shorter the better."

They were married as quickly as such a thing could be done decently; and the ugly pony trotted away with them, his very ugliness seemingly saying to me, "And you, you have tied an unlucky knot."

That inevitable cayuse! Ubiquitous Beamis! Within three short hours they were again at my gate. Maria, the new run-about—and all. There they were, life size and twice as natural. Maria was excited, Beamis was angry, and the poor pony was panting outrageously.

While Beamis tied the pony, Maria made her way into my study, but offered no word of explanation until her husband joined her.

"He advertised for a wife—" My, how the bride had changed! "I answered. We made it up and I came from Kansas City, Kansas, to be his wife—to be his *wife,* mind you, *not his owl!*"

Old Beamis' brown eyes sparkled jet black.

"I know what I promised you," flamed she, addressing me, "that I would obey him and keep him and all that, but I didn't promise to be an owl—and I won't!"

"The place is good enough for me, and for her," retorted Beamis. "Maybe it is not just like other places, but it's to my notion exactly, and I'm not goin' to leave it for her—or anybody else."

"What seems to be the trouble about Mr. Beamis' place?" hopelessly queried I.

"Nothing," smiled Beamis' wife severely. "The trouble is all with me—and the trouble is that I am a woman and not an owl!"

"And I've got money to leave her when I'm gone," put in Beamis, his tone a little conciliatory, for Maria's tears were coming, "but the place is good enough even if I didn't have the money to leave."

"Can money make an owl out of a woman?" demanded Mrs. Beamis of her husband. "I say that the place is not fit for a woman, and the minister here would say the same as I say, if he saw it. Tell him what the place is, and if he says it's fit, I'll go back."

"Come on, Parson," said Beamis, dragging me out of my house, "I'll just show it to you as quick as we can ever git there."

I went. As to direction and distance, I am not sure. I remember that the sun that day was California's hottest, and the dust her very worst, but the wild flowers by the roadside were in their glory. After a rather painful journey, to me, we came to a little clearing in the otherwise dense woods. Across the clearing I spied a fence surrounding an immense redwood tree. Beamis drove up to the fence and tied the pony. The circular fence inclosed a field of a million nodding, sun-kissed poppies.

"Get out," directed Beamis, "and come in."

I saw no house, but I followed him in—in the enclosure, I mean; and I followed him around the big tree. His house was in that tree!

And such a house! It consisted of one circular room, artistically hewn out in the trunk of the giant tree. And the room was tastefully furnished with modern household goods. There was a folding bed, a cooking stove, two chairs, and a table. The walls and floor were covered with priceless skins and curios. Nor were these all; there was a dainty bookcase filled with handsome volumes.

"Is it fit?" proudly asked Beamis.

I looked at the big pistol in his belt, I saw his great fists, I noticed his quivering chest.

"Fit for a queen!" replied I, and my reply was enthusiastic, too.

"Will you tell *her* that?"

"Yes."

So back we started. Tree Beamis had won. He was very happy. He offered to add to the fee which he had that morning given me. He promised to give me the best bear skin on his floor. Beaming Beamis!

Back to my study we came; but to my relief and Beamis' great disappointment, Maria was not there. Away we dashed to the railway station, reaching there just in time to see Maria Watts Beamis board the fast mail; but we got under the window where she sat, a few seconds before the train pulled out.

"Tell her it's fit!" roared Beamis.

"Fit for a queen," I declared—I meant a queen bee; of course I did!

"Come out," commanded Beamis, "Maria, come off that train!"

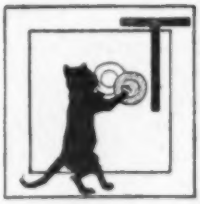
"You have forced the young minister to say what he doesn't mean," flashed Maria, with all her might trying to close the window. "Where I come from, owls live in trees."

The train began to move. Beamis made a lunge for Maria's arm and succeeded in catching the sleeve of her natty grey suit. The sleeve ripped clean from the shoulder, slipped over Maria's hand, and fell limply across Beamis' big feet. Like a spoiled child, he stomped the defenceless sleeve into the ground; but in a second, deciding it a wiser course to be wholly rid of every reminder of his Maria, he quickly rescued the sleeve from the dust, rolled it into a neat ball, ran after the departing train, and threw the sleeve-ball into an open window.

Far up the street an excited lounger shot furtive glances from behind a huge telephone pole.

In the Turkish Room*

BY C. HILTON-TURVEY



TWO men sat in the library of Vance Kent's handsome bachelor apartment. One looked glum, the other sympathetic.

"I tell you, Burd, it's no use! I've turned every possible stone. Hilda tells me they sail on Wednesday—this is Monday. What's a fellow to do?"

"Hm!" mused Burdill Browne, commonly dubbed Burd, "you hadn't thought of shooting the old lady?"

"Oh, if you're going to turn it into a jest, we may as well stop talking. I tell you," he went on passionately, turning to face his friend, "it's no joke to me. My whole life is bound up in Hilda Stafford. It will go hard with me if I lose her."

"I know, old man," returned Burd penitently, "but since the whole affair hinges on Hilda's mother, shooting her seemed the most direct way. Joking aside, Vance, her father has no objection to you, has he?"

"Not the least!" answered Vance decidedly. "He was even good enough to say that since Hilda has to leave him some day, he'd rather lose her to me than to any other man."

"What's her mother's objection to you anyway?" Burd asked abruptly. "You're young, rich, good-looking."

Vance Kent threw out his hands in a gesture of exasperation. "Objection?" he repeated in disgust. "No objection that anyone knows. Only one of those absurdly senseless, idiotic prejudices she's given way to all her life, so Mr. Stafford told me shamefacedly —poor old chap! I felt sorry for him. He's spoiled her by yielding to her notions, and so has Hilda."

Vance strode to the window and looked out on the wind-swept square beyond with its gaunt, bare trees.

Burd rose, and made a leisurely round of the room, peering at the books in his near-sighted way and whistling an almost inaudible tune through his teeth. He stopped at the fireplace and gazed medi-

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tatively at the smouldering logs, as if he had quite dismissed the problem that agitated his best friend.

"When and where have you seen her lately?" he asked suddenly, over his shoulder.

Vance started. He had forgotten the other was in the room.

"When? Where?" he repeated, turning around. "I've met Hilda Stafford nearly every day for the last week—at countless teas, dinners, social stunts of all sorts. Much good it did either of us! Her mother was never farther off than the length of the room."

"Any more functions?" Burd asked, still staring into the fire.

"Yes," Vance answered. "There's the Colonial Dames' tea at the St. Regis tomorrow afternoon. Hilda and I will have to say goodbye in that chattering crowd," he added bitterly. "Her mother is so afraid something will happen that she won't let Hilda out of her sight, either night or day. She knows jolly well that something *would* happen if we got a chance alone with a minister—no such luck!"

Burd waved his friends remarks aside as if they had no bearing on the case.

"Have you got the license?" he questioned.

Vance laughed shortly. "I've carried the license about for three weeks."

Burd turned and faced his friend. His big, plain face was aglow. He tip-toed across the room like a conspirator in a play.

"I've got a plan!" he announced mysteriously.

Vance met him half way.

"What is it?" he asked tensely.

Burd leaned over and whispered a few words in his ear.

"Impossible!" exclaimed Vance, starting as if he had been shot. Then, gripping the other's hand and shaking it with a will, he shouted, "But possible or impossible, we'll have a try at it!"

The tea of the Colonial Dames was in full swing at the St. Regis. Burdill Browne, eagerly watching the entrance, like a cat at a mousehole, descried Hilda and her mother making a leisurely progress along the corridor toward the scene of the festivities. He pounced on them amiably, paying his devoirs to the mother with the subtle respect that had won her sufferance for "that plain Mr. Browne" from the beginning. He spoke very casually to Hilda, bearing Mrs. Stafford's sharp scrutiny as he did so with a guileless and impassive countenance. When they reached the receiving line, he took advan-

tage of a momentary lapse in the mother's attention to whisper in Hilda's ear:

"Don't be surprised at anything that happens. If you are, *don't show it.*"

She had hardly a chance to flash him a glance of assent when her mother turned and, passing her arm through Hilda's, began a conversation á deux with an old friend, keeping Hilda in bondage while they exchanged limitless chatter. Burd lingered nervously by, standing first on one foot, then on the other, like a crane in a swamp.

At the door that led to the Turkish room stood Vance Kent, gazing across the palm room at the back of Hilda's fair head, which was all he could see over the intervening crowd. Torn with impatience, yet not daring to approach nearer, he stayed close to the heavy portières, ready to dodge behind them should Mrs. Stafford direct her eagle glance toward him.

Would Hilda *never* look around! Vance drew his handsome brow into a frown and set all his will power into a long and earnest gaze at the back of her slender white neck.

Ah! At last! The crowd between them thinned. Hilda turned and looked full into his face, then the color rose warmly and deliberately in her cheeks, like a slow, rosy dawn on a snowy slope.

In that moment, Vance beckoned and pointed meaningly behind him into the Turkish room, in the doorway of which he stood.

"Oh, Mamma," Hilda said guilefully, "I'm so tired standing here. There's Nan Barry over there, and lots of other people I must see to say goodbye to."

Mrs. Stafford's arm tightened on Hilda's, as she swept the room with her lorgnette. Hilda's heart was in her mouth; but she need not have concerned herself. The doorway that led to the Turkish room was empty. But directly behind the heavy, red curtain, waited the most anxious, adoring, determined, and madly elated young man in ten kingdoms!

"Well," returned her mother grudgingly, "I suppose you can go." She loosened her grip on the young girl, and watched her slow and graceful progress across the room, attended by "that plain Mr. Browne." Just then an old acquaintance swam into her line of vision, and for the moment Hilda was forgotten. Mrs. Stafford felt quite safe, with her eye on the door of the Turkish room. She knew it had no other outlet, and unless Hilda were spirited up through a hole in the ceiling, there was no way she could escape her mother's vigilance.

If Hilda and Vance had hoped to find themselves alone in the Turkish room, they were doomed to disappointment. The mellow, shaded lights revealed crowds of richly appareled women, with the sparse mixture of men common at such affairs.

Vance clasped her small hand ardently and led her to a seat on a divan at the far corner of the room. As she sank down amongst the cushions, a small, square, serious looking man arose, and stood before her.

"This," announced Vance in a tone of suppressed excitement, but, for the sake of possible spectators, assuming the air that goes with frivolous social exchange, "This is the Reverend John Roberts, Burd Browne's friend, who has kindly consented to marry us."

Hilda gasped. Then, seeing Burd's warning eye upon her, she looked up with a brave assumption of indifference, and reached out her hand to the young clergyman. Her searching, upward look into his face made the moisture rise in his eyes. He reassured her with an earnest glance in return, and the warm, friendly clasp of his hand.

"When?" she breathed, turning to Vance, who stood beside her in the deep shadow cast by the pattern in an Oriental wrought-iron lamp that hung above them.

"Now!" he answered, exultingly, smiling down upon her.

"Here!" she exclaimed in amazement, looking about the crowded room.

"Why not?" he asked masterfully, gazing deeply into her eyes.

"I am ready," she said after a moment, paling, but with a little lift of her small head that made Burd remember Vance's confident assurance that Hilda was a "game little sport" and would not back down from her word. She had promised Vance weeks ago that she would marry him "whenever and however" he could manage it, and she would do it, too!

At this moment Nan Barry entered the room, and, having taken her bearings, began to drift cautiously toward them. They awaited her arrival anxiously. Vance fidgeted about and looked at his watch four times in a minute. As Nan came near, Burd reached out a long arm and, drawing her toward the divan where Hilda sat, said with a mock flourish:

"One of the witnesses, an' it please you!"

Hilda jumped up with a little cry of pleasure. "Oh, I'm so glad it's you, Nan!" she exclaimed, and pulled the newcomer down to a seat beside her.

"Now!" urged Vance in a whisper, turning to Mr. Roberts. At

the word, the clergyman tucked into his pocket the little black book into which he had furtively glanced from time to time, clearing his throat in a professional way that entertained the people near him.

"Sounded as if he was goin' to make a speech," remarked a young man, languidly amused.

"Dearly beloved," began the clergyman softly, and at the words both girls sat up very straight.

"Loosen up, girls!" adjured Burd, smiling down on them. "Loosen up, or you'll give it all away!"

Nan leaned over and made a pretence of buttoning Hilda's white glove. "This is a hard stunt, Hilda," she murmured. "It's like 'looking pleasant, please!'"

"We are gathered together," went on the clergyman solemnly, "here, in—" the buzz of conversation rose deafeningly around them. Vance bent his head to listen to the clergyman's whispered words: "Here, in the face of this company, to join together this man and this woman—"

"Why, Hilda!" said a cheerful voice, and a stout, middle-aged lady pushed her way through the crowd near them, and fell upon the young girl with effusion. "When do you sail?"

Hilda reached out a shaking hand.

"Why, I'm not— Oh, tomorrow," she faltered.

Vance muttered a word that is not usually included in the marriage service. Burd champed openly. He began to fear for the success of his scheme. What was the status of people, anyhow, over whom only a part of the wedding ceremony had been read? He could not conjecture.

The stout lady exploded like a roman candle into a shower of staccato questions, which Hilda, trembling with nervousness, answered at random. Vance was aghast, Nan on the verge of tears. But just when the wedding party was touching the depths of despair, the stout lady gave a final parti-colored sputter or two, and departed for the dining room.

With a sigh of relief they applied themselves once more to the business in hand.

Half-way through the ceremony, Nan looked up, and gasped with horror! There, in the doorway of the Turkish room, her lorgnette leveled upon the group around the divan, was Mrs. Stafford, evidently bent on taking the girl under her maternal wing again.

Burd spied her at the same moment. He leaned toward the minister. "Don't you know a quicker way out?" he asked anxiously.

"Her mother is at the door," he continued, glancing at Hilda. "It must be done by the time she crosses the room."

The young clergyman nodded. Then, taking a step toward the shadow that engulfed Vance, he said quickly, forsaking for the moment the regular order of the ritual:

"Wilt thou have this woman to be thy wedded wife?"

"I will," said Vance in a ringing tone, but half disguised by the mounting chatter around him.

At the sound of Vance's voice, Mrs. Stafford, who had stopped to speak to a friend, stared suspiciously across the room. Even then, she did not discern Vance lurking in the shadow. So, seeing nothing to alarm her in the group on the divan, listening interestedly to a poky looking young man, whose back was toward her, she let her lorgnette drop on its slender chain and went on talking.

"Wilt thou—" began the clergyman, looking down at Hilda with friendly reassurance. The rest of the question was smothered by the greetings of two dames as Mrs. Stafford moved toward them, but Hilda looked up with parted lips till he paused on the unheard words, and then put all her heart into a whispered, "I will."

The clergyman looked inquiringly at Vance and began:

"With this ring—"

Vance came boldly out of the shadow, sheltered by the watchful Burd on the one side, and by Nan on the other. He sat down by Hilda, and, taking her little, cold, bare hand into his own, slid the tiny golden circle on her slender finger, and repeated the solemn words after the clergyman as fast as they both could speak them.

"Then," declared the young minister, his voice shaking in spite of him, "I pronounce you—"

"Come, Hilda," interrupted Mrs. Stafford's voice so close behind Burd that he jumped a foot! Then as suddenly recovering himself, he turned and engaged her in a rapid and incoherent conversation, while the reverend gentleman bent down over Vance and Hilda and finished his sentence very softly in their ears: *"Man and wife."*

"Is it all done?" asked Nan, tearfully, under cover of Burd's mad chatter. "Are they really married?"

"Yes," answered the minister deliberately, "they are!" He was about to add a word more, but Mrs. Stafford, sinking down on the divan, looked up pleasantly at him. "Haven't I seen you some where?" she queried.

The young man colored slowly and painfully. "You have," he answered. "I am the assistant at St. Angels."

"Indeed! she remarked. "Are you interested in the Colonial Dames?"

"N—not to any great extent," Mr. Roberts answered truthfully, if not politely.

Mrs. Stafford raised her lorgnette and eyed the blushing cleric as if he were a beetle under a microscope. She began to take one of her prejudices to the young man, a prejudice that, had she known it, was only too well founded.

Burd hastened to break the tension.

"Mayn't I take you out to the dining room, Mrs. Stafford?" he asked. "You and Miss—Mrs.—er—er—you and your daughter?" he finished in confusion.

Upon her gracious assent, Burd steered for the dining room. He poured out amiable small talk as they went, and so maneuvered that Mrs. Stafford's back was turned toward Vance as they left the room. That young gentleman lingered in the shadows, torn by a thousand emotions, and gloweringly watched them depart.

A short time afterward, as Hilda sat dutifully by her mother, making a pretense of eating a flower sandwich, the young clergyman made his way into the crowded room. He waited till Burd returned with an ice for Mrs. Stafford, then, under cover of that gentleman's frantic conversation, he bent over Hilda and contrived to slip into her hand a piece of paper, folded small.

"Your certificate," he said in a low tone.

Hilda colored, and the little round dimple in her cheek deepened. She slid the important document into her muff and closed her hand tenderly upon it.

"Thank you so much for—for everything," she murmured. And the sweetly grateful look she turned upon him did much toward salving the conscience of the young clergyman, already pricking him for his unconventional services.

The bridegroom is always a negligible quantity at a wedding. Vance Kent was a particularly negligible one. Married in a roomful of chattering people; hiding under the shadow of an Oriental lamp; not daring to stand up openly with the darling of his heart,—the ceremony concluded, he was thrust into a corner, while the whole bridal party sallied off without even a backward look in his direction. He felt like a ghost at a feast. Necessary as it was to the success of their plan, the whole manner of it nettled him extremely. Church weddings he abhorred. To stand up before a whole congregation of vapid people at the most solemn moment of his life and to run the

gauntlet of a thousand curious eyes as he came down the aisle with Hilda on his arm—that would have been bad enough, goodness knows! But to be married at an afternoon tea, as it were to the click of tea spoons, and with the sound of inane conversation buzzing about them! Vance was glad when Mr. Roberts returned and brought him the certificate to sign, before taking it to Hilda.

"Tell me," he stammered, as he handed it back, "how does she look?"

"Very sweet," returned the clergyman, smiling indulgently.

"Not frightened?"

"Not in the least. Very self-possessed."

Now, this intelligence should have cheered the new-made benedict. It had precisely the opposite effect. Hilda, timid; Hilda, pale and distrait, would have sent the blood leaping in his veins in a fine fury of chivalrous feeling. But Hilda, "self-possessed"; Hilda, looking "very sweet"—for other people to gaze upon while *he* was banished! Poor Vance suffered some horrid qualms.

Now, however, there was something to do. "Something to do"—that infallible remedy for all ills! He made a cautious way out of the Turkish room, darted down a corridor, and, having donned overcoat and hat, waited anxiously by the door of a big touring car that stood by the curb. Now to play the rôle of the bold Lochinvar, instead of being a negligible quantity!

As he waited, the Stafford car drew up just behind his own. A moment later, Hilda and her mother appeared at the hotel entrance, with Burd and Nan in the background, all agog with excitement over the final chapter in the affair.

As they came down the steps, the Stafford chauffeur opened the door of the limousine and stood waiting to help Mrs. Stafford in. At the same time, Vance Kent, with a smiling gesture, beckoned Hilda to enter his touring car.

To Mrs. Stafford's amazement, Hilda nodded assent.

"Goodbye, Mamma!" she whispered, throwing her arms round her mother's neck and kissing her warmly; "I'm going away with Vance."

"You'll do nothing of the kind!" snapped Mrs. Stafford, highly scandalized.

Vance came forward and stood by Hilda, holding her arm with an air of proprietorship which was not lost upon the indignant mother. The meaning of it began to dawn upon her, for as Hilda's left hand rested on Vance's sleeve, the slender golden circlet on her fourth

finger was only too plainly to be seen. To the mother's eye it stood out as if it were a ring of flaming electric lights.

"What does this mean?" she demanded shrilly.

"We're married!" they announced in a breath; and Hilda's trembling fingers drew the certificate from her muff and held it up for her mother to see.

"Married! When?—Where?" gasped the irate woman, purpling with anger and consternation.

"Just now, in the Turkish room," Vance answered quietly.

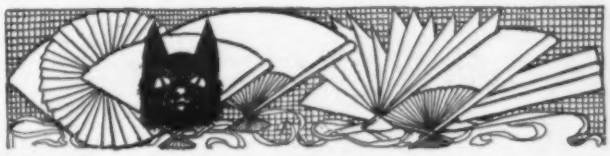
"What? Under my very eyes?"

"Yes," returned Vance; adding mischievously, "As one of the witnesses, won't you sign this?" He pointed exultingly to the certificate, fluttering in Hilda's hand, and reached into his pocket for a fountain pen.

"Ah!" she exclaimed; consumed with chagrin. Leaning forward she caught at Hilda's wrist. "You wilful girl," she commanded, "come home with me this minute!"

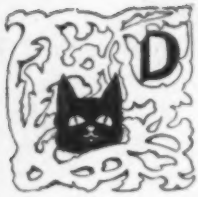
Like lightning, Vance interposed. "Impossible," he said, smiling tenderly down on Hilda. "This little girl has a prior engagement with—her husband. We start south immediately on our wedding tour. May we not hope for your good wishes?"

Good wishes! The poor lady looked like a seething geyser preparing to spout vitriol! As she sputtered, fumbling for her lorgnette to palsy this audacious young man with a venomous glance, Vance whisked Hilda to his own car and lifted her bodily in. Before they could seat themselves they were off, with an impetus that threw Hilda into her husband's arms. Holding her closely, he poured into her rosy little ear all the love—the longing—the impatience, that for the last hour had consumed him.



The Ghost of the Green Dragon*

BY HENRY M. HALDEMAN



DESPITE our resolution to make an early start, the sun was high when we left the Niobrara. We had all overslept as a result of sheer weariness and a defective tire had further delayed us. But before venturing upon the almost roadless stretch of desolation which lay to the south, we took the precaution to fill everything that would hold water, including the radiator, from the stream.

It was Dustin's day at the wheel. Mrs. Dustin, worn with the long days of riding and depressed because of the futility of our side trip to the Niobrara, or as much no doubt, because of the nature of that mission itself, was glad to take the rear seat with Bertha. This arrangement gave the girls such comfort as the car afforded and left me the place beside Dustin where I could be useful in opening gates and helping to find the way.

We had found that Alec Thurston had gone to Denver for an indefinite stay, so after a single night's camp at his ranch on the north bank of the Niobrara river, we decided to push on to more congenial surroundings.

Thurston was some kinsman of Mrs. Dustin's and, so far as was known, had been the last person to see and talk to poor Ed Bedison before the fatal termination of his mad race to cross the continent in the Green Dragon.

Though without family or near relatives, Ed, with all his hobbies, his wealth, and his heart of hearts, held a well deserved place in the affections of us all.

When Ed's passion for speeding had developed into a mild case of dementia, the four of us, with the rest of his friends, had done our part in an effort to divert the mania.

Ed, after long cherishing an inordinate fondness for machines of high power, had, with characteristic impetuosity, formed the costly habit of switching his devotion rapidly from one pattern

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or make of motor to another more to his fancy, each in its turn being relegated to oblivion with a certainty which seemed to auger ill for our poor friend's reason.

But symptoms had taken a new turn. After weeks of elaborate designing, planning, and testing, the guarded doors of a local shop opened to the advent of a new creation in motors.

Full-fledged and christened, the Green Dragon came forth with a blare that brought the motor world up short. The new car was the last word of a finished connoisseur. Not even Bedison knew what she had cost. In appearance she was long, rakish, and ugly; yet not ugly; but with a mute something of grace and beauty, when in action, and a very air that commanded awesome respect.

And from that day the Green Dragon developed character. Nor did Benison forsake her. Rather did she grow in his affections. He seemed satisfied with this consummation of his genius. She absorbed him; none but he ever sat at her wheel. He became a blended part of that quivering thing of green and shining brass.

The Green Dragon was aptly named. The peculiar, tremulous, penetrating throb of her engines became known in half a dozen states. Whenever the hills along Bedison's favorite courses echoed the familiar siren shriek, the road ungrudgingly opened for the Green Dragon's swallow flight.

Here, then, before us, lay the great racer's last course. What fickle fate had a score of times charmed the big machine safe through apparent destruction only to meet an end in this far off trail of desolation? Somewhere across the divide she lay, rusting in a patch of "bad lands" where the treacherous road wound. Near by they had found what was earthly of Ed Bedison. Little wonder! He had reached the place and was cold before a sanely driven car could have topped the divide and begun the long slope which ended in a broad irrigated valley.

At noon we reached the divide, where a single tent sufficed to shelter the dinner operations. With the first half of the road behind us, a bit more of cheerfulness found its way into the conversation. The tents were a part of the terms of a little wager which our tour had evoked, and were to be enjoyed at all times that bad weather did not force us to brave the hardship of hotels.

By night we hoped to make camp in the outskirts of Canal City, from which point a half day's ride up the verdant valley would bring us again to the beaten stretches which would one day be embraced in a transcontinental highway.

Dustin took the long slopes with an exaggerated care which proved the state of his nerves similar to that of Mrs. Dustin, who continually blamed herself for proposing this pleasure-blighting part of the trip.

So it was quite as a thing to be expected that dusk gathered before the valley was yet sighted. After a doubtful inspection of the weakened tire, we lighted the lamps and continued on for another hour, when the condition of the tire forbade further progress that night.

We unloaded tents and water jugs and made camp in the buffalo grass. The meter showed us to be still some sixteen miles from Canal City, and somewhere, certainly, not far off, reposed the wreck of the Green Dragon. Mrs. Dustin ventured the hope that we had passed it in the darkness. There was no moon and consequently this hope seemed plausible. Yet somewhere in the chalky outcroppings which occurred at various intervals along the way, lay the once gay racer.

Our speculations in this respect, as we sat after supper in the glow of the oil lights, were terminated by the approach of a lantern through the darkness. The tall form of a squatter stalked within the circle of light.

"Camped, eh?" he queried, laconically.

"Yes," said Dustin, tugging at a roll of bedding without rising. "Have a seat?"

"No, I reckon I'll mosey on. Seen yer lights and jest wondered. Pretty outfit you got. Travelin' south?"

"Yes," answered Dustin, "Canal City tomorrow."

"Don't see many of yer automobiles up yere. Resky road. Most of 'em keeps to the valley. Feller killed here a year agone."

The obtuseness of the fellow's manner repelled, where the subject might otherwise have aroused interest. Mrs. Dustin and Bertha withdrew to one of the tents, at which the man spat familiarly across the blankets and sat down.

"Yes," replied Dustin, without interest, "we heard of it."

"Oh, you hearn it, did you? I hope I may never see the likes of it. He swoops down from the hills like a bat from Hades. Just a piece below here he struck. Gad! I he'ped pick him up,—a hundred feet from his machine and still a-hangin' to the steerin' wheel.

"I reckon the likes of that motor ain't often built. Big as a battleship and lettin' out a noise like the devil possessed. It makes

me creepy to think on it. But I 'spect she's whistled her last. She's laying there yit, eighty rods along,—a pile of scrap."

Not impressed with our sociability, the stranger soon took himself off. In the light, rarified air his dreary whistle sounded close by long after the lantern had dropped below a distant rise.

A light scud of clouds sailed through the upper air, half obscuring the stars, while below everything was quiet. The night was intensely, uncomfortably still.

The bedding was undone and the tents hastily made ready for occupancy. The stranger's call shared no part in the fragmentary conversation. All hailed eagerly the prospect of rest and sleep.

The chances of a shower being remote, the outside preparations ended with extinguishing the lights. Dustin and I started simultaneously to perform that office, when a light puff of air from the southwest bore a sound to our ears. We both paused to listen. A slight breeze commenced to fan our faces and the sound grew distinct.

"It's a motor," said Dustin; and we watched, momentarily expecting a flare of lights to top some contour, heralding the approach of a car. No car came, but still a muffled, vibrant throb floated out of the night.

"It certainly *is* a motor," I replied; "but where? And why doesn't it come?"

Three or four minutes passed. The sound seemed now here, now there, wafted by the wind; now up the road, now down.

Dustin for the second time faced the north. Mrs. Dustin and Bertha stood expectantly before the Dustin's tent, listening. Neither spoke. Dustin stole a sidelong glance at my face. I in turn resumed attention to the lamps, turning both down low. Their light may have been too bright, or it was not bright enough, or was the wrong kind of light; at any rate, Mrs. Dustin's face seemed to have turned ashen pale.

There was a sudden tensity in the camp. All scanned the gray stretches on four sides. The freshening breeze bore the distant throb of a motor, no nearer, no farther, except as it rose and fell with the wind, now sinking to a crooning drone, again swelling clear and strong as though we had but to look to see a monster car leap into view with lights ablaze. Yet no lights pierced the night; only the steady liquid churning of a finely organized engine.

Mrs. Dustin slipped forward and laid her hands petulantly on Dustin's sleeve. Bertha leaned over the warm radiator and shivered.

Dustin kept his face in the shadow and I, seeing his wisdom, did the same.

Vain deceit. The truth showed on every countenance. That shrill, vibrant throb which beat the light air with its weird tremolo had no counterpart; it was too distinctive to want argument, too real to admit denial. It was the voice of the Green Dragon.

"What is it?" breathed Mrs. Dustin, at last, and her voice was thick. The first part of Dustin's answering headshake was a brave attempt at indifference, but it trailed off into something remarkably like a shudder.

Dustin stepped into the road, Mrs. Dustin at his side. They walked toward the south. Bertha and I took the opposite direcion, not knowing what better to do. But this mild probing offered no explanation, no relief. The white scud continued to veil the stars. On three sides loomed the horizon, dull and gray, not the twinkle of a window to relieve its dreariness. To the south the landscape dropped into blackness, save a faint glow away off to the right, which might indicate the location of Canal City. Not a bird or an insect ventured a note in all the great quiet. There was only that steady, sobbing drone, which might have been mystery itself beating time.

The darkness of the road offering no clue and less relief, we doubled our tracks, to find the Dustins likewise returned to the friendly embrace of the camp. Dustin had turned up the lights again and was unfolding camp chairs. His face was a study in baffled bewilderment.

The chairs were the merest sham; no one wanted to sit down. With the voice of the Green Dragon of Ed Bedison floating wide upon the night, a consultation in what seemed the plausible course of conjecture was too absurd for intelligent minds.

None cared first to voice such a weakness, yet each felt the compelling truth of it. More welcome would have been the means to fly before the phantom notes. Yet we sat down, stiff and constrained, while ever the notes hovered, steady, palpitant, alive, warbling their melancholy dirge.

My forehead ached with trying to think, while Dustin gnawed his lip, keyed high with shame because he could not utter the word that would turn it all into a joke and send us foolishly to bed.

Often as some one of us caught his breath as if to speak, the sound fell with fresh reality—the peculiar, throaty, penetrating throb of the green monster driven at a speed none but Bedison himself would have dared.

Almost uncanny that sound had been, even in familiar surroundings and in the broad light of day when the Green Dragon was a living, breathing thing. Then here, in the dark pocket of this wilderness upon which our eyes had not yet rested, the weird monody was come again to hang echo-like about the still, rusting ribs of its author. It was sinister.

Dustin, at length, as if with sudden thought, sprang to his feet and seized one of the oil lamps. Catching the suggestion in his glance, I followed him. We walked briskly down the road to the south.

The road which for the most part was smooth, sloped abruptly a short distance from camp. Near the bottom of the slope a broad curve circled the white, outcropping brule. Here we found the black wreck wedged in a deep scar and half covered with dry tumbleweeds.

We gazed, awe-struck with the evident violence of its plunge.

"Listen!" exclaimed Dustin, after a moment.

We listened, straining our ears intently. The silence of death was restored to the night. Not even a breeze disturbed the dry tumbleweeds.

Assured there was no deceit, Dustin hove a deep breath and turned the light upon the wrecked engine—the twisted cranks, the rusty, cracked cylinders.

Satisfied with the scrutiny he abruptly strode back to the road.

"Tait," he said, turning, "in heaven's name, what was that noise?"

I could only respond with a negative shake of the head. "Let's get back and to bed; morning will doubtless explain all."

We returned briskly up the hill, confiding all sorts of speculations, none of which under less bewildering circumstances would have done credit to sane men. Total darkness in a strange region offers little foundation on which to base a reason.

The girls, seeing our light, met us at the top of the slope. We started simultaneously to report, but as abruptly stopped. Again the clear, quivering throb rang wide upon the air, and again we clung in a body, dumb. It seemed in the air, *of* the air, a phantom voice passing and returning, intangible except as it framed a picture, --a vision: a crouched driver, reckless, audacious, a giant racer, livid green, glittering, plunging, swooping; and ever that pulsing heart-flutter of steel, palpitant, penetrating, tremulous with life.

We dragged the ruined tire to the light and worked feverishly and futilely for two hours, while the girls bent over us, full of interest and envious of the occupation we found for our hands, or

pulled the tent flaps close in a fruitless effort to shut themselves up from the torment.

In the end Bertha produced the coffee pot and brewed it full to the brim. We gathered about with cups, and ignoring the cream can, swallowed the hot beverage black, pints of it.

So, with the last bridge burned, so far as sleep was concerned, remained only the long wait for daylight.

The air grew chill, the breeze held with its ebb and flow of dismal monody. The girls, for the sake of warmth, wanly sought the shelter of the tents, whereupon Dustin, clever chap that he is, produced from somewhere a handful of big, black Havanas. In return for this boon I passed him a wool blanket, or rug as the English would have it; and so, with no small degree of bodily comfort, we attacked the cigars viciously in an effort to allay the pangs of mental torture.

At length I bethought myself to wind my watch.

"What time is it?" asked Dustin, discovering his memory had been as bad as my own.

"Two-twenty," I replied.

"It seems a week since last night! No signs of day!" he added a moment later, glancing eastward and lighting another cigar.

We discussed our caller of the night before, but even though he might offer some relief, there was no agreeing on the direction he had taken, and now all lights would be extinguished.

At least no bodily menace seemed to lurk in the darkness, and as our nervous exhaustion increased we grew languidly reconciled, though our nerves were ready to snap at the slightest variation in the ghostly program.

Finally the east turned gray and the stars faded. Steadily the barren landscape became revealed, and in the hush of dawn the sound died as mysteriously as it had come.

On three sides—north, east, and west—the scene extended far, bleak, barren, uninhabited. To the south the road was intersected at right angles by a long yellow line—an embankment of some kind which trailed off into a blur in either direction of its course and formed our horizon to the south.

Breakfast, with its pot of black coffee disposed of, we left the scene of our night's misery, for a stroll down the road in the fresh exhilarating dawn. The Green Dragon with its cracked enamel and dented, rusting sides, roused no display of interest in Mrs. Dustin or Bertha. We passed on with scarcely a comment.

The embankment proved to belong to a large canal, its waters spanned by a low bridge and stretching away on either side, straight as an arrow, like a broad silver ribbon shining in the sun.

Below lay the valley. And the miracle of irrigation! The desert divided from the sown! Hundreds of homes, thousands of haystacks dotted the fields like beehives.

A beaten road followed the narrow crown of the opposite embankment. Amazed at the sudden change of scene, we crossed the bridge and followed the hard smooth surface of the embankment. Far below gleamed a river and away to the west lay a gauzy blanket of smoke pierced by the spires of Canal City.

"What a contrast!" exclaimed Bertha, with a glance above and below the artificial water course.

"Night and day seem to hold equal contrast," commented Mrs. Dustin, surveying the quiet peace of it all with a wan smile.

Ahead of us, on closer view, the placid surface of the water seemed broken by some sort of structure in the canal. We approached a series of gates extending the width of the canal and so holding the flow in check as to raise the water's level several feet. Immediately above, a large lateral drew a heavy volume of the water thus diverted, its inflow regulated by a series of upright "needles" of hard pine.

And here was our mystery revealed. One of the "needles," projecting above the level of the embankments, was split and broken. A long, slab-like splinter ran its length, while the surging force of the water threw the broken timber into a rapid, rythmic vibration. The slapping splinter did the rest. Now almost drowned in the cavernous roar, the sound had been caught by the night breeze and wafted across the desert, while the water bellowed in its depths, unheard.

On the Turn of a Coin*

BY CLEVELAND MOFFETT

DOWN the corridor, walking carefully, came four hospital attendants, holding the stretcher resting on two large wheels, rolling noiselessly. The operation was over. On the stretcher lay a young woman, unconscious. Her face was beautiful, but white as the covering sheets, and her head was wound with bandages. She breathed faintly through parted lips.

Out of the operating-room came the surgeon who had finished his work, and with him his assistants, young men in blouses and black caps, most of them wearing pointed beards. An odor of carbolic acid followed them.

"Poor girl," said one, as he watched the stretcher turn into one of the wards. "I wonder if she'll speak before she dies."

"It will be better for her assassin if she doesn't," said another.

Then they went off to various duties. Last of all came Auguste Caseau, hurrying and behindhand, as usual. He had risen late, had reached the hospital late, and had had no breakfast. Of all the medical students at the Lariboisière Hospital there was none more popular than Caseau, but the pleasures of Paris at night often made him neglect his duties of the day. In the present instance he did not know who the young woman was whom he had just seen under the knife, nor had he any idea how her skull had been crushed with such frightful wounds. All he knew was that she had remarkable beauty and was doomed to die.

He was hurrying off to a neighboring café when a stranger waiting at the door touched his arm. The man's eyes were eager, he spoke with ill-concealed excitement and seemed like one who had gone many hours without sleep.

"Tell me," he said, "did she speak?"

Caseau shook his head, looking at the man suspiciously.

"Can she live?"

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"God knows, the doctor took sixteen pieces of bone out of her head."

"Holy Mother, sixteen pieces of bone!"

Caseau was walking meantime toward the café, and the man followed him. His eagerness for information betrayed an interest in the case that argued some special knowledge, and Caseau was curious. "Will you drink?" he said, when they had taken seats at a table.

The stranger called for absinthe and drained his glass quickly. "I must ask one more question, my friend," he said. "Tell me where were the wounds on the girl's head—were they on the back?"

"They were," assented Caseau, who had ordered his breakfast.

"Were there none in front, none on the forehead nor on the face?"

Caseau shook his head. "There were none."

"How strange," muttered the man. "She was facing him when. . ."

"Facing whom?" asked Caseau sharply, and the question seemed to bring the man to his senses.

"Pardon me; I forgot that you do not know. I have been through so much for the last twelve hours that I am dazed. Do you believe in occult things, hallucinations and so on?"

Caseau was only in his second year, and the lectures on hallucinations did not begin until the third, so he answered guardedly.

"That depends," he said, with an air of holding knowledge in reserve. He questioned with his eyes, and for the first time appeared sympathetic. The man ordered another absinthe.

"I will tell you about it," he said. "I shall go mad unless I tell some one. In the first place, let me assure you that usually I am the most matter-of-fact man in Paris; I never get angry, I never get excited, but last night"—He paused and a little shiver ran over him.

"But last night," repeated Caseau encouragingly.

"It was about nine o'clock, and I was walking up the Rue Fontaine with my hat off because the night was hot, and whistling because business had been good. You see I am a grocer down on the Street of the Four Winds. When I reached the corner of the Rue Breda, where I live, I stopped in a little cake-shop to buy some sweets for my wife. Then I hurried upstairs, two at a time, for I was eager to see her. Our apartment is on the fifth floor,

looking out on the Rue Fontaine, and a balcony runs along the windows where my wife keeps flowers growing. It is a nice place to sit summer evenings, and I expected to find her there.

"Imagine my surprise, then, on opening the door, to find the apartment quite dark, except for the glow of the little night-lamp from the bedroom at the end of the corridor. And instead of seeing my wife come running to meet me, all smiles, I found absolute stillness in the place, stillness and darkness. In that moment, as I stood with the door ajar, and my hand on the knob, there came over me a creeping sense of fear, something I had never known before. It seemed to me that some great danger was lurking in the air, that some evil presence was near me. So strong was this feeling that, acting on the first impulse, I stepped back on to the landing outside and closed the door behind me.

"In an instant, however, my reason reasserted itself, and ashamed of my weakness I opened the door again, closed it sharply behind me, and double-locked it. Then hanging my hat on a hook at one side I started down the corridor. There was a distance of twenty feet that I had to traverse before reaching the bedroom, and I assure you that I never in my life endured such torture as I felt in taking those few steps. At first it was a fear for myself that held me back, but presently this was superseded by a horrible sickening fear for my wife. I saw it was she whose life was threatened, or had been threatened, for the conviction grew upon me that I had come too late. When I was half-way down the corridor, I clutched the wall with one hand and pressed the other to my brow, which was throbbing with frightful fancies. They say that drowning men see strange things as death comes on, but no drowning man, I am sure, ever saw a vision more distinct than came to me there of my poor wife."

By this time Caseau was listening intently.

"She is a beautiful woman, I beg you to believe, and I saw her as plainly as I see you now, stretched on the bed, her face as lovely as ever in its setting of dark hair, only very pale. But there were wounds, dreadful wounds, on the back of her head, from which the pillow was stained crimson.

"But this was only a vision?" put in Caseau.

"Yes, a vision. God grant you may never have one. I was unable to move, afraid to speak. I seemed rooted to the floor.

"Finally my will conquered, and I staggered into the bedroom. With an awful fascination my eyes sought the bed, around which

were drawn the red curtains. On the side toward me, on a little table, burned the night lamp. Everything in the room seemed as usual—there was no sign that ill had come—yet I cannot tell you with what feelings I stepped forward and drew apart the curtains. My wife lay there apparently sleeping, her lovely face turned toward me, and the pillow beneath her head as white as her hand that pressed it. With a sigh of relief I sank into a chair. At that moment I was startled to hear, behind the curtains, a gasping sob, and then a burst of hysterical weeping. Hurrying to the bedside I besought my wife to be calm, assuring her that I was there to protect her.

"At last my wife recovered sufficiently to explain her fright as well as she was able to do so. She had dined alone about six o'clock and about seven had given Amandine, our servant, permission to go out for the evening. Then she had spent a little time tidying up the apartment, and about half-past seven had settled down to read in the room where we have our library. This room faces on the Rue Breda. In front of this room there is a short stretch of balcony, which ends in an iron partition that separates it from the balcony of the house adjoining, which is No. 4. It would be possible for a man to climb over this partition and step from one balcony to the other.

"As my wife read she must have dozed, for presently, although her back was turned toward the window, she seemed to see a man of large stature standing on the balcony outside and peering into the room. This man had bushy red hair and eyes of the palest blue —eyes that frightened her. Presently he withdrew stealthily, climbed over the partition, and peered into a window of No. 4. Once again he drew back, seemed to hesitate, smiled with a grim humor and noiselessly drawing a coin from his pocket spun it in the air and caught it deftly in his open palm. Then moving closer to the window for better light he nodded, put the coin back in his pocket and forthwith entered the room where my wife sat, passing easily through the long door-like halves of the window, that were swung wide open.

"Spellbound, my wife watched the man, who paid no heed to her, but made his way at once to the bedroom, she following in mortal terror. Approaching the bed he noticed that its curtains were drawn and paused a moment, casting his eyes about him as if in search of something. Near the fireplace lay a heavy brass poker which he picked up, returning with it to the bedside. Breathless

my wife watched as he put aside the curtains. A woman lay there sleeping, with her face turned away, but my wife thought it was herself. She saw the man lift the poker as if to strike, at which the woman lying in the bed started and looked toward him. At this my wife's terror burst the bonds in her throat and she cried aloud.

"Of course it was only fancy, a dream if you like, something that was not real, for the next instant she was alone in the room. But the effect was most distressing. Do what she would she could not drive from her mind the face of that tawny-haired assassin, with his pale blue eyes. It seemed to her that he was still near her with murderous purpose. In vain, lamp in hand, she searched the apartment, and tried to convince herself that nothing was there; in vain she closed and bolted the windows opening on the balcony. That sense of nameless fear pursued her still; and whichever way she turned it seemed to her that an enemy was crouching behind her, waiting his chance to spring or strike.

"Finally she went to bed, hoping that sleep would give her some relief; but she could not sleep, she could not get her thoughts out of the morbid channel in which they were running. So, anxious, restless, sick at heart, she had waited for me to come, and my coming, alas, brought her only added terrors, for my strange delay at the door, my opening it twice and closing it, then my long pause and silence in the corridor, instead of the cheery greeting I was wont to give her, made her sure that it was not I at all, but some intruder come to do her harm, some prowling assailant of the night, perhaps the very man whose eyes and fiery hair had frightened her so in the vision.

"Then, realizing that it was her husband who was there, the man who loved her, and that there was no danger at all, she burst into the fit of hysterical sobbing from which I had such difficulty in calming her."

"You are preventing me from eating my breakfast, sir, with your queer story," said Caseau. "And besides, I can't see what connection it has with the young woman who has just been operated on."

"Let me finish," said the man, "let me finish. We hardly slept all night, for our fears persisted in spite of the knowledge that no harm had befallen. I made matters worse by foolishly telling my wife of the fright I had experienced on entering the apartment, and my vision of the murdered woman. You will remember par-

ticularly that the wounds were on the back of the head, and you tell me that is where they really were."

"That is where they were on the woman in the hospital, but she is not your wife?"

"No, thank heaven, but you know who she is?"

"Not I," said Caseau. "I got in too late to learn any details."

"She is Marie Gagnol, who occupied the apartment adjoining ours in No. 4, Rue Breda."

"My God!" exclaimed Caseau.

Just then one of the other students came in from the hospital. "She's dead," he said. "She never spoke. But they are going to try an important experiment on her. Dr. Rosseau thinks she closed her eyes with fright at the very moment when she saw the murderer, and never opened them since. He's going to test his new apparatus for getting the last image recorded on the retina. If he succeeds it will be a new triumph for the hospital and for science."

"Gentlemen," said the stranger impressively, "if the doctor's experiment succeeds I believe on my soul that it will be also a triumph for justice."

That afternoon Dr. Rosseau made the experiment, with brilliant success; it was one of the first demonstrations of the possibilities of colored photography. Registered in the sensitive film of the dead woman's eyes, was found the distinct image of a man of unusual size, who clutched in his hands an uplifted poker. The man's hair was red, his eyes a pale blue.

Two months later such a man died under the knife on the Place de la Roquette. He had been arrested, convicted and condemned on the sole evidence of a pair of lifeless eye-balls, supported by the testimony of a woman who had never seen him except in a vision. On the eve of his execution he made a full confession. He stated that the murder was a chance crime, prompted only by greed. He had reached the balcony running in front of Nos. 2 and 4 Rue Breda by using a rope hung from the roof. He declared that for about five minutes while he was standing outside he had hesitated whether to enter the apartment of No. 2 or No. 4. He had rested the decision on the turn of a coin.

At Kelly's Maison de Chapeaux*

BY MARTHA MICHEL MARTIN

ANNE WELLER'S ambition was to be an actress but Fate's decision was that she be a clerk at Kelly's Maison de Chapeaux. No one looking at Anne's freckled face and stooped figure, could doubt that Fate was right. Yet Anne was not wholly denied her ambition, as she played an important part at Kelly's. Her unlimited patience, her knowledge of correct color combinations, and her tact in seeming to agree with the ladies, whereas they really were influenced by her, secured her a following that even her favorite actress might envy.

Anne was used to having a waiting line of customers while the other clerks were idle, but to have the same person come back day after day for a week was a new experience.

The first day the person in question came, she attracted attention not only by her blonde beauty but by her refusal to be waited on. She picked up first one hat, then another, but when any of the saleswomen approached her she said, "I am only looking today." Finally she stopped near Anne, who was at leisure for the first time since the lady entered the store, and asked, "Have you a brown tailored hat that I can wear with this gray suit?"

"Brown?" repeated Anne, in the tone one uses when he cannot believe he has heard aright.

"Yes, I am very fond of brown."

Anne made no reply. It was her rule not to talk until she knew her customer, because, as she said, "you never can tell if a woman wants you to be a human being or just a clerk."

After the lady had tried on five or six hats, she picked up her own as if it were useless to try farther. "Your hats are very pretty, and I do not know why I cannot be suited, but it seems that I can't be."

"I know just how you feel," smiled Anne. "I am that way about people. Some seem to have everything nice about them and I

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cannot like them, and then someone else comes along, and without any reason whatever, I think she's fine. Now maybe you can find what you want in another color. Let me show you a black and white one that I have been hiding. I said I just would not sell it except to someone who could show it off."

The black and white hat was a sale. Anne was glad for she wanted to know the lady's name; but in this she was disappointed, as she paid cash and said she would take the hat home in her automobile.

The next day she returned, and when Anne saw her with a bandbox her heart sank. She came up to Anne hesitatingly.

"You sold me this hat yesterday, didn't you? I am sorry that I have to trouble you again, but I want to exchange it for a larger one. Mother thinks I look better in a large hat."

If Anne thought that the lady was old enough to decide the size of her hat for herself, it would take a mind reader to find it out. Receiving the hat as if she were glad to get it back, she placed a chair for the lady before a triple mirror.

"It was kind of you to bring the hat back instead of keeping it and being dissatisfied. I'd rather exchange a hat ten times than to have one displeased customer. Try on this black one. It is one of our imported hats and cannot be duplicated, because the trimming is made especially for the hat. This band of sequins is made by hand; the Bulgarian pattern, and the irridescent drops on the pompon are put on by a process known to no one but Trouveau of Paris."

"It is lovely," assented the lady after Anne had properly adjusted it, "but I am afraid it is a little too daring for my face."

"No indeed! You are fortunate. You can wear anything. A handsome blonde has the right to demand attention."

"Now you are persuading me," gurgled the lady, "and if mother objects, I shall have to bring it back."

"Do, and bring your mother with it, and we will please her if we have to manufacture something."

Sure enough, the third day the lady again appeared with a bandbox and sat down to wait for Anne, who, in passing her, stopped to say, "It was my fault. I persuaded you."

When the lady's turn came, she handed Anne the hat. "Mother would not hear to my keeping it. She said it made me look ten years older."

Anne looked at the hat lovingly. "She is mistaken but if she really thinks so, it is the worst fault a hat can have. Better look ugly

than old. Now if you will tell me what your mother likes, I shall try to find it for you."

"Mother wants me to get a hat suitable to my age, one that is modest, stylish, and becoming."

Anne had a way of being conveniently seized with a cough, which made it necessary for her to put her hand over her mouth. Sometimes this movement hid a smile.

It was here that Anne coughed.

"Suppose we design a hat especially for you. As a rule we do this only for actresses, because we get the advertising out of it, but I would make an exception in your case just to show you that we can please."

"That would be charming," and the lady lifted her blue eyes to Anne; "but I am afraid to have it done. It might not be becoming."

"The risk is ours," explained Anne. "First our artist shows you the hand-colored drawing, then our milliner reproduces it, and you may take it or not. And if you do not take it, you will have the distinction of being the first one to turn down a special design from Kelly's Maison de Chapeaux."

The lady was not impressed. "No, I should rather not have the mental worry of a special design. Show me something in a leghorn. Surely you must have something that I can wear."

Anne brought forth her stock of leghorns, and the lady selected one to be trimmed very simply with ribbon.

"Shall I send it out?" asked Anne.

"No, I had better come and try it on. May I see it tomorrow?"

"Yes, the milliner promised me all my today's orders tomorrow."

After she was gone Monsieur Kelly spoke to Anne.

"Hasn't that woman been here before?"

"This is the third time. She has brought back two hats and they were not worn either. I cannot make her out."

"Cash sale?"

"Yes. The second hat was more expensive than the first one and she paid the difference, and now she has a credit."

"Please her if you can," ordered Monsieur Kelly, "but watch her."

The fourth day the lady came in the afternoon. She was beautifully dressed in a one piece black charmeuse and when she put on the leghorn, the effect was bad. "Mother would be distressed to see me in this hat. Can you forgive me if I do not take it?"

Anne smiled. Not very cheerily, but she smiled. "I could not

possibly forgive you if you took it and distressed your mother."

"You are wonderfully patient."

"I would not be at Kelly's if I wasn't. All I ask is, don't you grow impatient, and I am sure that I can sell you a hat that you and your mother will like. How about a *lingerie* hat?"

"The Corday shape? No, I am tired of it."

"Do you want a hat for any special occasion or costume?"

"No, I want an all around hat, not too dressy to wear with a suit, and dressy enough for an afternoon frock."

Anne shook her head negatively. "I am afraid it cannot be done. You'd kill the dress you have on, if you wore a tailored hat with it, and that swell gray suit of yours would go for nothing with a picture hat. I don't see how you can get along with just one hat."

"Oh, dear," sighed the lady. "I haven't found one and you want me to get two. However will I do it?"

Anne tapped her chin with her forefinger. "Suppose you get a medium sized black chip, trim it with a velvet bow and hide the bow with a bird of paradise? We have a patent for fastening on these birds and you can easily remove the bird when you want a simpler hat."

"You are a genius," exclaimed the lady. "If you would trim a hat like that at your own risk, I'd come to see it."

Anne tried to appear enthusiastic when she told her she could see the hat next day.

True to her engagement, the woman came the next day, dressed in a gingham gown. When she saw the creation from the milliner's hands she gave a suppressed cry of joy. "It is a love of a hat. Please let me take it home. I do not even want to try it on with this horrid dress. How could I have been so careless as to wear it?"

Anne looked her disappointment. "Oh, I do want to see you in it. I am sure you will look queenly."

"Not in this dress. I could not think of putting the hat on now, but if I keep it, I shall wear it up and let you see it." With that, she paid the amount due and took the hat with her.

"That sounded like a sale," commented Monsieur Kelly.

"Not to me," answered Anne. She said, 'if I keep it.' Hats are not her trouble. She is up to something. As soon as she learned that I was busier in the afternoons, she came then so she could sit and watch. She'll be back."

And she was. This time her excuse was that she had foolishly told her mother about the specially designed hats, and although

she liked the black chip, she wanted her to have one of special design. She wore a dress of king's blue ratine, handsomely embroidered, and she wanted the hat to match it.

Anne conducted her to the atelier. "I shall send Monsieur Kelly and the artist to you."

The lady came out of the studio all smiles. She went up to Anne. "It was delicious, even if the hat never materializes. He spoke of my contour and my lines as if I were a famous statue."

"A lovely woman is a statue to Monsieur Botique. Shall we mail you the drawing?"

"No, thank you, I shall call to see it and bring mother with me. I do not want it to go beyond the drawing, unless she is pleased."

"I hope that you do not feel that you will have to have the hat made because of the drawing."

"I might have felt that way somewhere else, but you have been so kind to me that I am not a bit afraid to be a nuisance here."

Three days later the lady came back, but her mother was not with her. Anne exchanged glances with Monsieur Kelly. "Please do not be disappointed because mother is not with me," was the lady's greeting. "She could not come, so I shall decide, as I must have a hat."

She pronounced the drawing a gem and begged Anne to have the hat just like it.

"Won't you give me your name?" asked Anne. "We always make a name from the owner's to put on the label."

"Wait until I take the hat," was the only response Anne's curiosity received.

The designed hat was to be ready for inspection the following Tuesday, and Monsieur Kelly gave Anne permission to stop trying to sell the lady if she were still not satisfied.

Tuesday morning, bright and early, she came, dressed in her ratine gown and this time a gentleman was with her.

"This is my patient friend," she said to him as Anne approached. "How is the hat, dear?"

"You are going to like it, I know. It really is made for you."

"And you still think it possible to please me?"

"There hasn't been anybody yet that Kelly's couldn't please."

The lady was laughing as Anne left for the hat, but she was ejaculating and clapping her hands when Anne returned with a dream in blue and cream, which it would be unfair to describe, as the result would be a flood of imitations.

"You are right," she said to Anne. "I do like it, love it, adore it! Have you ever seen the equal of that?"

The man shrugged his shoulders. "What do I know about a woman's hat?"

"A man designed it if it is a woman's hat, so you need not be ashamed to admire it."

As Anne turned the mirror for the lady to see the sides and the back of the hat, she caught the lady staring at her.

"What would you do if I refused this one?"

"I would not give up, but I am afraid I would be discouraged inwardly."

The lady impulsively caught hold of Anne's hand. "You have been a wonderful help to me and I want to explain my conduct to you. I am May Mignon, who is going to star in 'The Milliner Pro Tem.' My part is that of a saleslady who, for certain reasons, must be patient under all circumstances. I wanted to see for myself if such a person were to be found in life, and several of my friends who have bought hats of you, suggested you as a study. That is why I came. You don't think me impertinent, do you?"

For a minute Anne was abashed. "You, an actress, came to study me? I wanted to be an actress."

Miss Mignon took Anne's face between her hands. "Don't do it, dear. You would spoil a perfectly good saleslady."

"Excuse me," interrupted the man. "Rehearsal is at ten."

"So it is, but I must pay my bill. I want all the hats, dear, that I have returned, as I need them in my play, and you may label the special design, 'The Mignon'."

"You mean that you are going to take the hats that your mother does not like?"

"Yes," laughed Miss Mignon, "and I am going to give you passes for the opening night so that you will come down and see the mother in the play and learn why she did not like them."

The Dance at Lum Williams*

BY WILLIAM H. HAMBY

THERE was something unusual astir. I had been away some years, but knew when the "resters" in front of Newton's hardware store and in the court-house yard were all standing up, Buckeye Bridge was being shaken by some primal comedy or tragedy.

The minute I got out of the hack I began to look for Windy Jim Davis. Hamp Smith or Jake Watts or a half dozen other fellows I saw, could have told me the news—told it in their disjointed, irrelevant way. But whatever was happening was interesting, and I wanted to get the whole thing with all the frills and fine points. Therefore, I sought and found Windy Jim.

He talked assiduously about the weather and the crops and his one-eyed mule until I got him on a bench in the shade in a corner of the court-house yard.

"Windy," I said, "what's happened? What's everybody excited about?"

"I reckon it's about two-thirty?" squinting his eye at the sun.

"Two-thirty-four," I answered, looking at my watch.

"Then it ain't happened," remarked Windy with relish. "And folks are excited because they don't know when it is goin' to happen, or where it's goin' to happen, or to who it's goin' to happen. They don't know nothin' except that there is a lot of curiosity rattlin' around in their heads."

"What is it?" I demanded. "I want the whole thing."

And I got it in Windy's own way and time.

"We'll have to go back some considerable. It all started with that there new Baptist preacher, Paul Wells, that came down here last summer. He had mighty positive opinions, like most young fellers that ain't ever been married.

"He was shore some gospel scrapper, let me tell you. Sunday

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mornings he would flail into them other denominations and skin the hide off their backs. And then Sunday nights he'd jump onto the world and the flesh and the Devil,—and he shore made 'em squirm. I used to get plum sorry for the Devil being abused like that behind his back; but it wasn't the preacher's fault. He'd talked it right into the Old Boy's teeth if he'd got the chance.

"I reckon that sort of preachin' was all right,— it made real good talkin'; but Paul had no tact. Just as sure as an influential Methodist brother that was good for a fat shote on Thanksgiving went to the Baptist church, that Sunday Paul would lay himself out on baptism. He'd bat the doctrine of sprinklin' around so hard you'd think anybody that would put up with it was an own stepson of the Pope of Rome.

"And if a Campbellite came to meetin', that preacher would jump into Alexander Campbell and all his followers so hard you'd think a Campbellite spent most of his time playin' tag with infidels.

"But the worst break he made, was the first Sunday night in September.

"There was a big crowd there that night; there nearly always was. Among 'em was old Lum Williams and his daughter, Hattie. Old Lum ain't been to church for twenty years before, and he shorely was an ungodly old cuss. He'd drunk more whiskey and done more fiddlin' for dances than any other feller in the Ozark mountains. And Hattie needed religion powerfully bad. She was the purtiest girl this side of nowhere, and was as chuck full of devilment as chili sauce is of pepper. I don't mean there was really anything agin her character, but she was shore full of mischief and could stir up things plum reckless.

"Hattie had some mighty good points besides her figure, though, for all the old ladies liked her. It ain't nothin' agin a purty girl if the old ladies don't like her; but it's shore mighty fine recommendation if they do like her.

"Well, as I was sayin', everybody was mighty anxious for Hattie to get religion, and I sat there just cringin' like, hopin' that preacher wouldn't say nothin' to rile them up, for both old Lum and Hattie were mighty easy to take offence at preachers.

"He got up and read one of them mild, soothin' psalms, and we all breathed easy. Then he run his fingers through his black curly hair, and run his piercin', devil-darin' eyes over the crowd till they lit on Hattie, and there they stuck for a minute. He drawed back his lips until he showed both rows of white teeth and says:

" 'Brethern, I'm goin' to preach tonight on the damnation of dancin'.'

"And before he was done he shore made Old Lum's fiddle look like the forked tail of the Evil One; and he painted blushes about three layers deep all over every female dancer in the house.

"Old Lum and Hattie clum the miff tree in a hurry, and when meetin' was out they went away as mad as a cat in a creek. And we knowed from that moment there was war on between the sheepfold and the powers of darkness. To put it in English pure and undefiled, things begun to hum around these old hills. Old Lum and Hattie started in to bust up that meetin' house; and the preacher started in to put Old Lum and the powers of darkness into the git out class.

"First, Hattie commissioned two of her most taggin' admirers, Buck Snider and Cal Scott, to bust up the meetin' and run the preacher out of the country.

"I reckon if anybody could have done it, them two could. You remember Buck? Well, he's just the same now, only more so. He's got a big thick neck, and a low mutterin' voice, and he moves sorter slow. But if Buck was a dog you'd never want to set him on a hog unless you wanted to make sausage right away. And Cal is just the same only he's exactly different. He's slim and wiry, and got black eyes that he slings around as careless as a kid with a whip, and his laugh makes you feel like you was settin' on a keg of dynamite twistin' the tail of the Devil.

"Well, Cal and Buck were pretty good friends at that time, and they went in to bust up the next meetin' by starting a rough house.

"But they didn't have no luck at all. When that slim, swarthy preacher got done with them, they felt like they'd been run over by a saw-log. He didn't touch 'em; didn't have to. He just done 'em up with his eyes and his tongue. He just marched down the aisle and stood over 'em for thirty minutes. Jeeroosalem! But I ruther be packed in a hay baler than go through the sweat them two underwent durin' that half hour.

"As that didn't work, they started a flank attack. Every time the preacher would announce a special meetin' Old Lum and Hattie would get up a big dance and invite all the sinners that the church needed at the mourner's bench. And every time Old Lum and Hattie got up a dance the preacher would call a special meetin' and announce that he was goin' to say somethin' so hot it would be worth comin' miles to hear. And most generally he did.

"Well, it went on faster and furiouser until things got plum dangerous. Not that there was any danger of fightin' between the church and the world. The danger was in gettin' too much of the world together in the dances at Old Lum's.

"I reckon you know a dance in these hills ain't no sham battle. A feller that ain't fixed to take keer of himself needs to be called somewhere else when the dance begins.

"Well, to get down to the pint, as Hen Withers used to say when he drunk the top off'n a quart of whiskey, Buck and Cal were both wild over Hattie Williams. All the rest of the fellers were, as to that; but the others shied off and left the way clear for Buck and Cal.

"When two fellers like them are in love with a girl like Hat., dancin' just aggravates 'em. And they only felt sociable toward each other by spells. That is, when Cal got to dance all evenin' with Hat., he felt mighty sociable toward Buck; and then when Buck did all the dancin', he's the one that felt sociable.

"I ain't sayin' them two fellers would have dwelt together like the lion and the lamb in the Sunday school picture book, even if there hadn't been no dances. But Old Lum buckin' the preacher ondoubtedly was a contributin' aggravation. You see, most generally we don't have but about four dances a year because the circuit court likes to keep up with the docket. But when it comes to havin' one a week reg'lar, and three a week when a protracted meetin' is on, then that is plum hard on the constitution.

"All fall Buck and Cal have not missed a dance, and every one they went to they loved Hattie a little harder and one another a little lighter.

"I went to most of them dances, for you know I'm a back-slider and usually don't go up to the mourner's bench until the first meetin' after Christmas.

"But I couldn't for the life of me tell which one of them Hattie was goin' to take. One night she'd dance purty near the whole evenin' with Buck. And as they swung around and around, her cheeks would look like the colored part of one of these here wild roses, and the corners of her mouth would crinkle up with satisfaction, and her eyes would open and shut sorter soft and slow like the workin' of a firefly on a dark, damp night.

"Then I'd say, 'Buck's got her,' and I'd see from the way he held on to her, thunder wouldn't shake him loose.

"Then the very next time, like as not she wouldn't hardly know

that Mr Buck Snider was on the North American continent. She'd dance nearly the whole blessed night from early candle lightin' to early sun lightin' with Cal. And they would look into each others eyes and laugh and have the best time of anybody this side of—most anywhere.

"Then I'd say, 'Cal's got her sure,' and he was so all-fired quick on the trigger that I was some nervous every time they passed between me and Buck.

"It kept gettin' more and more interestin' until Cal and Buck plum quit even speakin' to each other. I got so I felt like I used to when I was a kid and made a cedar bow. I'd string it up so tight I was afraid to draw it another inch lest I bust it; and I was afraid not to draw it another inch lest I wouldn't bust it.

"About two weeks ago Paul Wells started a revival at Bethel Church and it was a red-hot one, too.

"At the same time Old Lum started in with a bunch of dances that broke all the sportin' records of these old hills. There was five dances in just twelve days. And them dances shore had some class. If there's anybody in the world more in earnest than a sinful hill-billie up at the mourner's bench under conviction, it's that same sinful hill-billie at a rip snortin' dance when he ain't under conviction. Well, some of these galoots around here just swung back and forth. One night the preacher would have 'em at the mourner's bench, the next night Old Lum would have 'em kickin' dents in his pine floor as they 'swung to the right, swung to the left, and balanced all.'

"Monday night there was a lull. Everybody danced in a quiet sort of way. There was no disturbance to speak of. Wednesday they was still quieter. Somehow there was a feelin' that just kept the fellers from kickin' up trouble—a sort of feelin' that the first kick at the lid would let more hell fire out than they could ever get back. I think that was the best order I ever saw at a dance. There wasn't a single feller drunk, there wasn't even one fight, and I don't think I heard ten cuss words the whole night. It made me plum shivery everything was so still; made me feel like I was at a funeral or gettin' ready for one.

"And then Friday night it set in that way again. Everybody talkin' in sort of slow and uneasy tones, and everybody kept their eyes purty constant on Buck and Cal. I felt more nervous than ever—just like you do when you set off a blast and get behind a tree and wait for it to go off.

"Hattie herself seemed worried. She hadn't appeared to care before, but she acted real polite to both of 'em. She danced one dance with Cal, and then she danced one with Buck. Then she changed off and danced with another fellow. While she was doin' that, neither Buck nor Cal danced. One sat in one corner of the room and the other in another corner. The dance was in Lum's big twenty-four foot square sittin' room. The furniture was all carried out to the kitchen exceptin' a row of chairs and benches around the wall. Old Lum set on the west side with his feet propped up on a table, playin' the fiddle.

"I looked first at Buck and then at Cal and then at Hattie. And every time I looked at Hattie I forgot both of 'em. She shore was somethin' to look at all right. I'm some timid about fightin' but if I'd been foot-loose and there'd been a show for me gettin' into gait with that girl, it would have took mighty serious friction to get me out of the road.

"When that dance was over, Buck and Cal started for Hattie at the same time, and the rest of the dancers just naturally faded away and gave 'em wagon room.

"Cal beat him to her about a head and a neck, but Buck had such a start he couldn't stop and run square into him. Cal steps back and lets out a most impolite cuss, and Buck makes a grab somewhere into his clothes and brings out a knife with a blade that looked as long as a corn knife. Then Cal yanked out one of these fast-barkin' bull dog forty-fours.

"For just about a month, it seemed to me, they stood there lookin' straight at each other, neither one a battin' an eye, and both waitin' for the other to move a finger. I never knowed before how long a feller could live without his heart beatin'. That whole crowd was just petrified. Even the women couldn't scream. It was so still I heard a mouse squeak under the floor, and when a puff of wind come in through the open door, I thought it was the evil spirit comin' to carry murdered souls off.

" 'Drop 'em!'

"We turned quick. Old Lum had dived under the table and brought up one of them sawed off shot-guns, and had the two young fellers covered.

" 'Put up them things!' he ordered in dead earnest. 'The first feller that makes a move, I'll fill so full of buck-shot he won't float. I ain't agoin' to have no disturbance around here if I have to shoot up the whole bunch.'

"Then it was, them girls and women remembered what their vocal box is made for. They let out a bunch of screeches that would have made a panther think it had lost its voice, and they begun to pile out of the doors and windows like a crick when the dam breaks.

"But Old Lum kept Cal and Buck covered and told some of us to search them and collect their dangerous and deadly weapons. We did; and got two guns, three knives, a pair of brass knuckles, and a slung shot.

' 'Now,' said Old Lum, 'you fellers get out of my house and if you have any difference to settle, go down in the holler there and settle it like gentlemen.'

"Lum's idea of a gentleman was one who settles his disputes with his fists.

"They went, and three or four of us innocent bystanders went with 'em. Old Lum rounded up the rest, got the girls back, and started the dance.

"Well, sir, there was a fight worth seein'. There weren't no rules and regulations. They just went at it with fists, feet, knees, and teeth. In about a half hour they backed off and set down to get their wind. They shore was a bloody sight, and they didn't have enough shirt left to tie a chicken's legs.

"I saw they was both just about tuckered, and thought it a safe occasion for a remark or two.

" 'Fellers,' says I, 'I can't figure just how this thing is goin't to come out. I can't exactly see what's the good of practicing clawin' each others eyes out. You ain't goin' to marry each other, are you? I reckon in this marryin' business the girl might have something to say. Instead of beatin' yourselves up until you look like a harrow had run over you, why don't you agree to leave it to her? Just go and tell her to take her pick, and let that settle it.'

"Well, sir, them fellers seemed to get it through their heads that there was some sense in them remarks, and got up and agreed to it. They both swore they'd stand by her decision and bear no hard feelin's.

"So we ups and makes to the house, them two fighters leadin' the way, walkin' side by side like a pair of oxen that had been through the Battle of Bull Run together.

"When we come in, everybody quit dancin', but there warn't no screechin'. They seen we'd come to some sort of an understandin'.

"Buck and Cal marched right up to Old Lum—and they shore was a sight to look at.

" 'Where's Hattie?' asked Cal.

" 'She went out into the kitchen a while ago,' answered Old Lum, not very friendly.

" 'We want her,' said Buck, dogged like.

" 'We want her to choose between us,' explained Cal. 'We've decided to let her pick the one she wants, and then not have no more trouble.'

"Old Buck picks up a piece of paper with some pencilin' on it.

" 'Hattie said for me to give you fellers this when you come back.'

" 'You read it ,' suggested Cal.

" 'Read it,' demanded Buck.

" He did.

" 'Pa, if those two rowdies come back, you tell Buck Snyder I wouldn't no more marry him than I would a mule that's been raised on fodder and buck-brush.'

"Cal's eyes was just dancin', although his face wasn't in shape to smile. And there was a titter around the room.

" 'And you tell Cal Scott that he ain't fit to black my shoes.

" 'And you tell them both that if they were the last men on earth I'd die an old maid before I'd marry either of them.'

"Cal looked at Buck, and Buck looked at Cal. And then the crowd looked at them and everybody just naturally laughed.

"Cal and Buck got out and I followed 'em, fearin' they might get to fightin' again. But as they got to the gate I saw 'em put their arms around one another and Buck says:

" 'Cal, let's get drunk.' "

"And did they?" I asked when Windy stopped.

'I reckon so. You see that was only last night."

"But what is it that is about to happen now?" I inquired.

"Well, you see," went on Windy, shifting his legs, "I was just naturally curious last night why Hattie sent in that note. So I did a little investigatin' and discovered she wasn't anywhere about the place.

"Then I started off toward the church, thinkin' maybe she had gone to Bethel to the revival meetin'. But half way there I met folks comin' home and they said the meetin' had closed for good and all.

"I kept goin', for that was on my way home, and I met 'em in the road in the moonlight, arm in arm. And they told me all about it.

"They eloped to Springfield and was to be married at his home at three o'clock."

" Who is it you are talking about?"

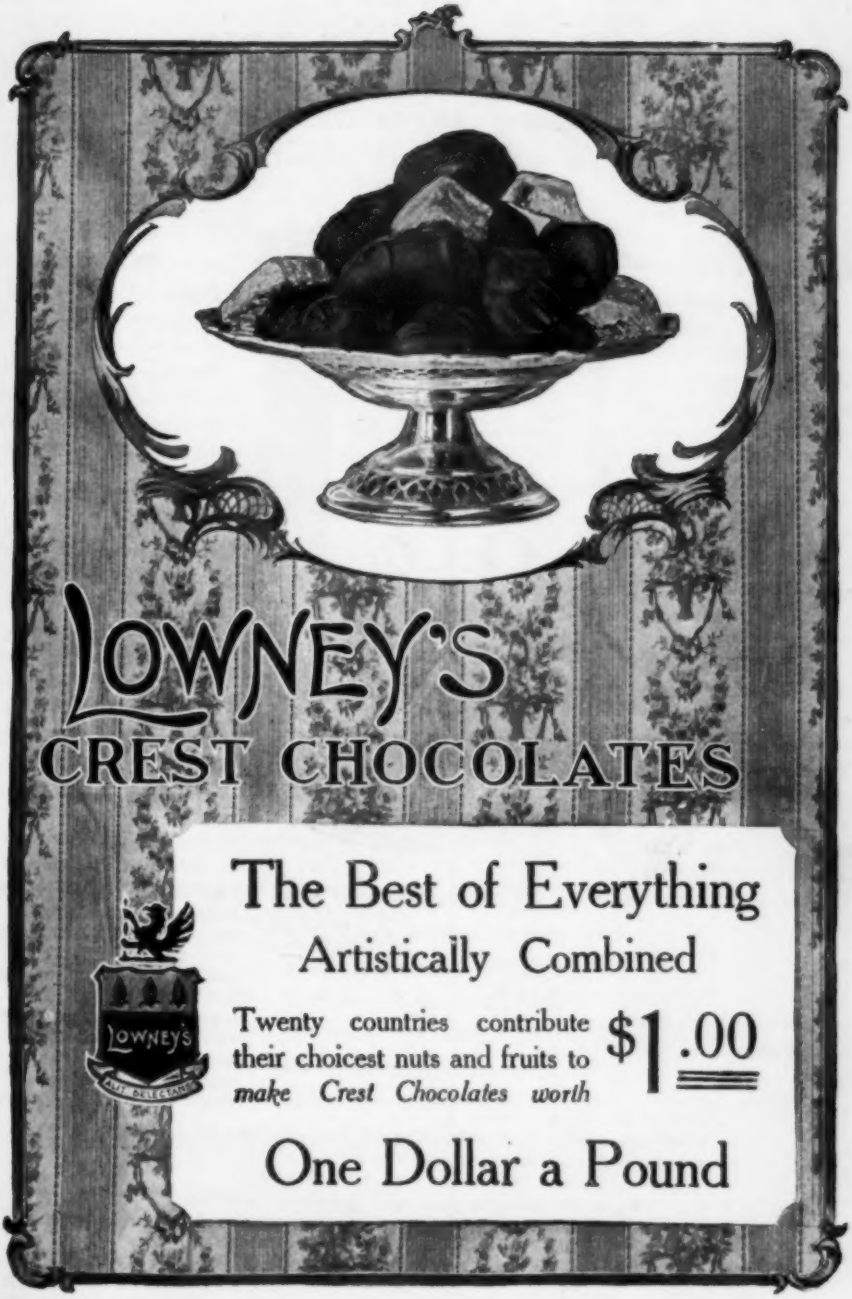
"That preacher," Windy grinned. "As they stood there in the moonlight with autumn leaves siftin' down over the road, she clung tight to his arm, and he patted her hand; and they laughed musical like and told me how they fell in love that first time they saw each other, when the preacher roasted Hattie for dancin' and she decided to break up his old meetin'.

"She thought she was just mad, but was in love all the time. You often can't tell the difference. She thought she would wear it off by dancin' harder than ever, but she overdone it. And the preacher thought he was just interested in her soul, but discovered almost immediate he was powerfully interested in all the rest of her, too. They had been seein' each other on the sly for two months.

"He's goin' to be a conductor on the Frisco; and he'll make a good one for he shore will put 'em all off that ain't got a ticket."

Windy stretched and got up leisurely and chuckled.

"Yep, I reckon Cal and Buck got drunk last night. If they didn't, they will tonight."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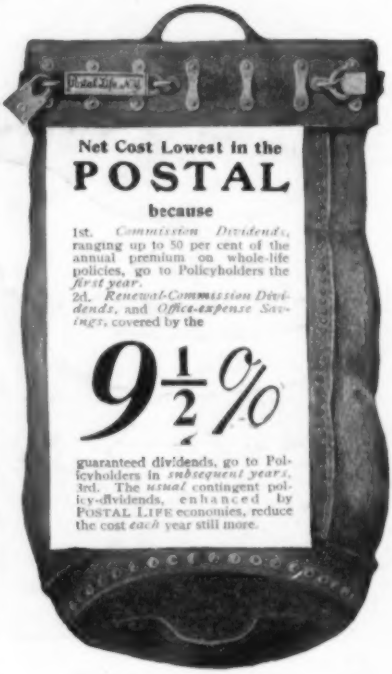

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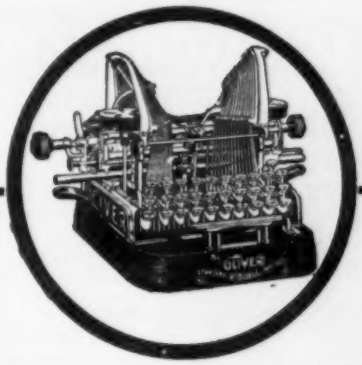

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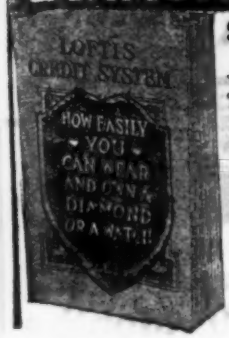

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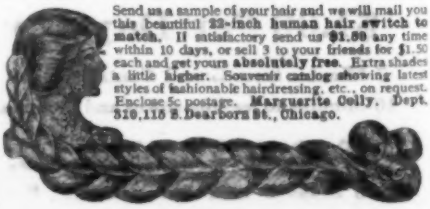

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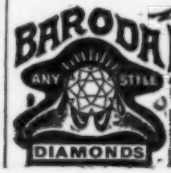

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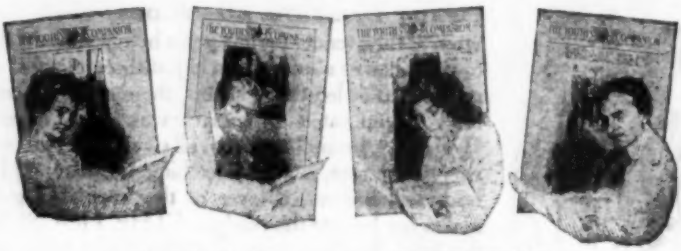

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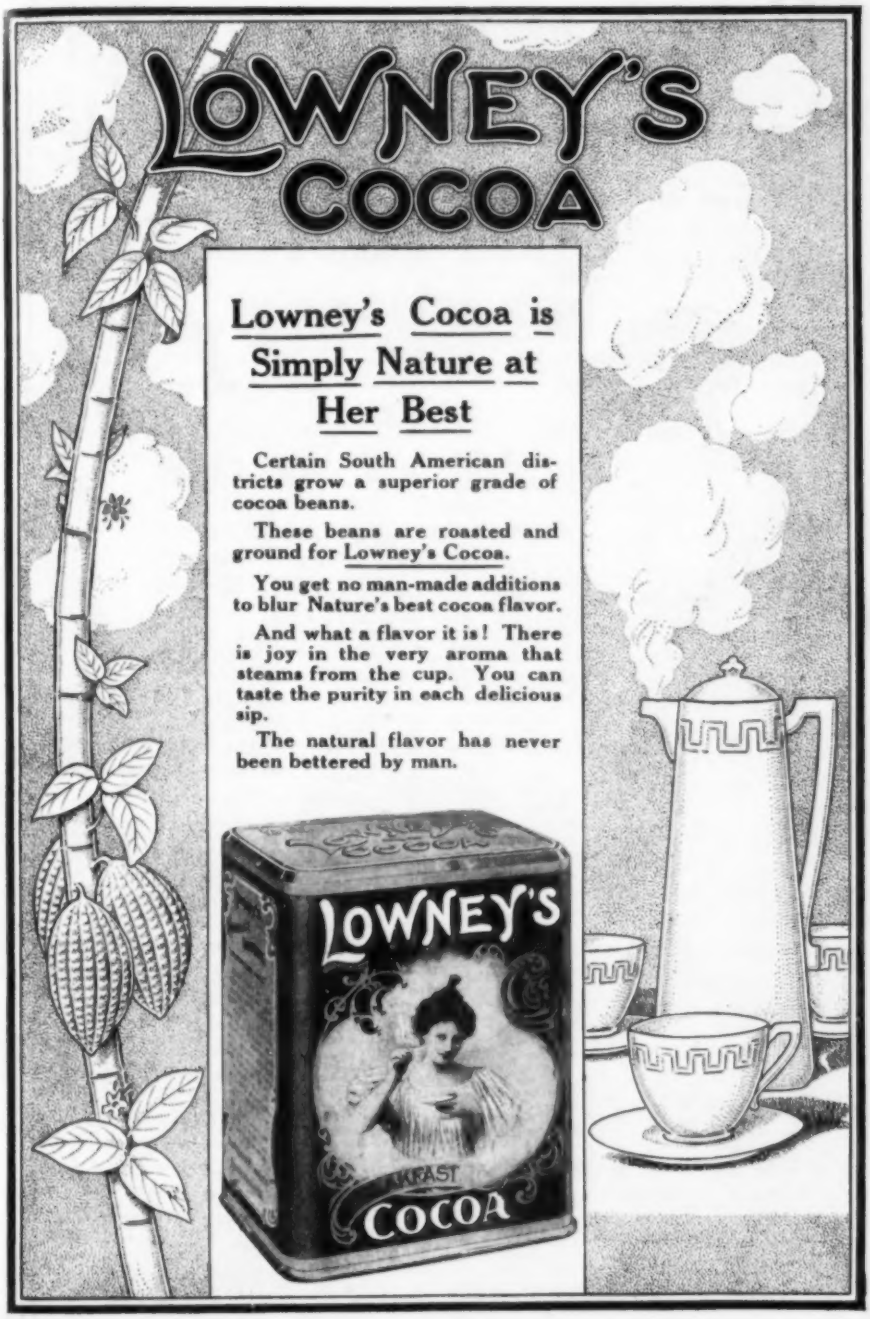
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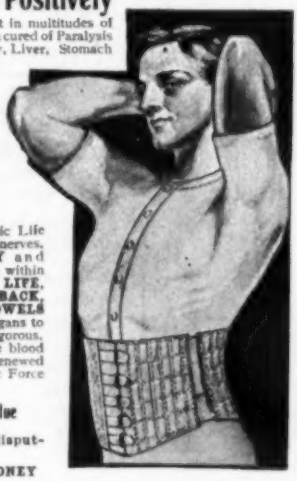

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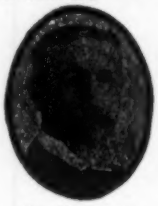

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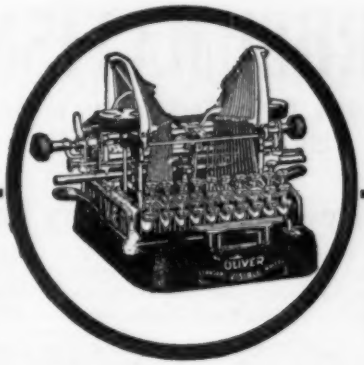

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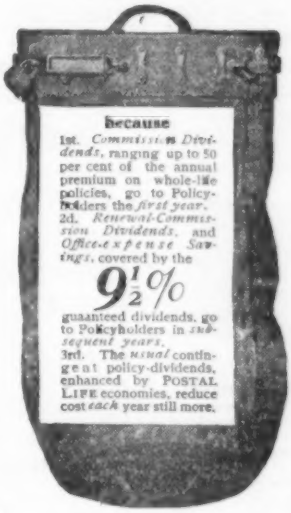

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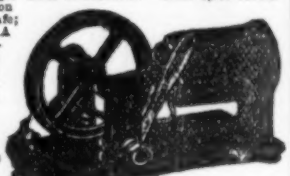

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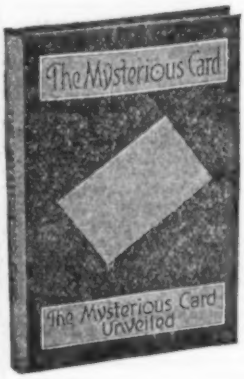

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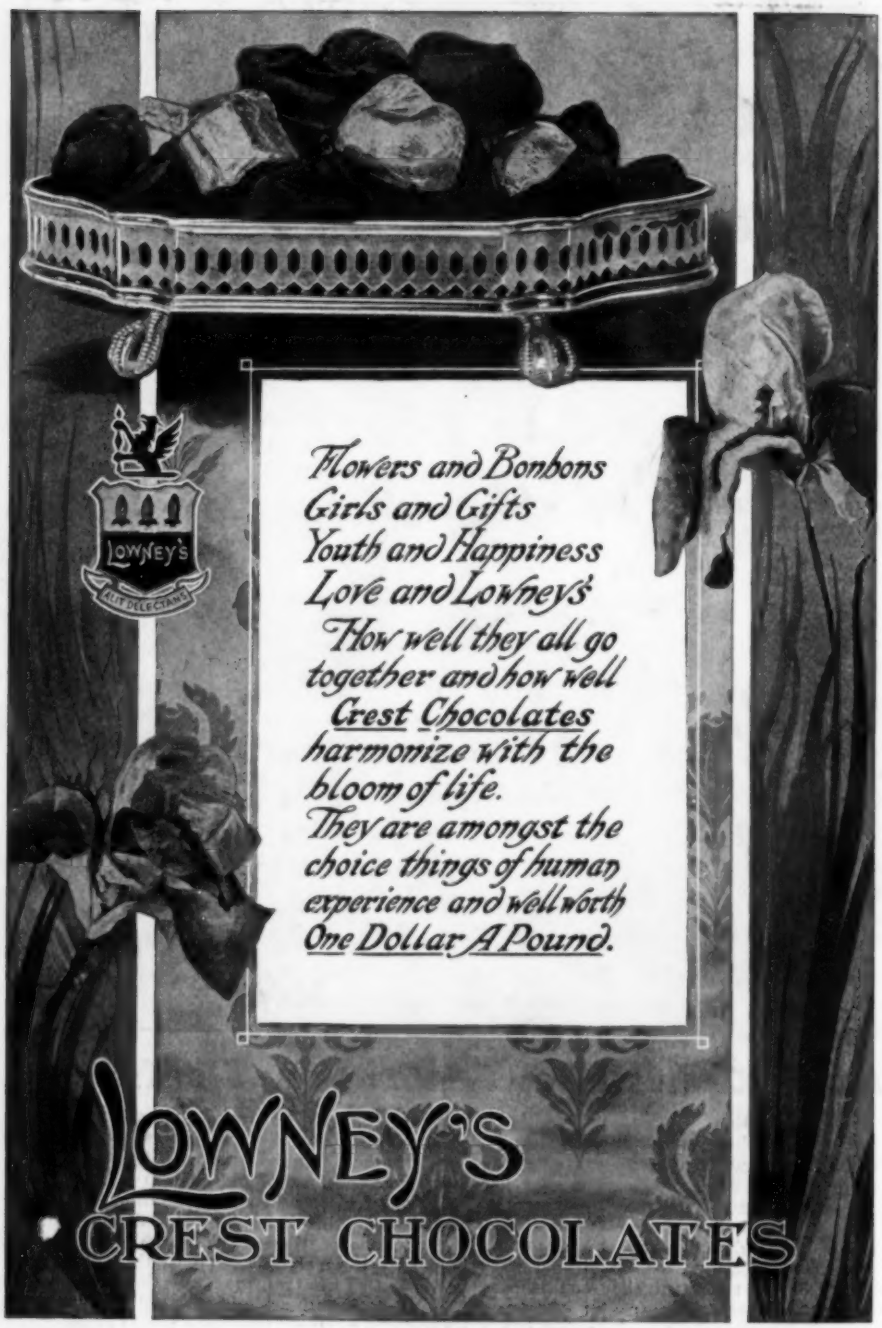
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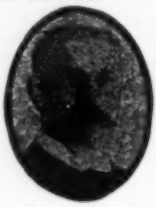

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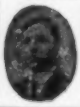

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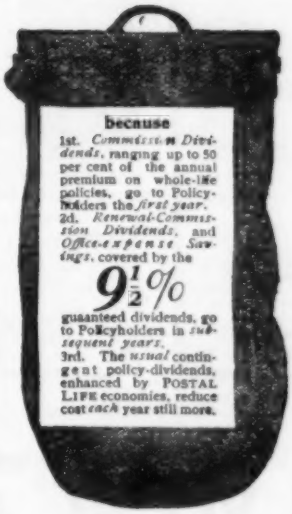

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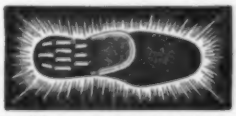

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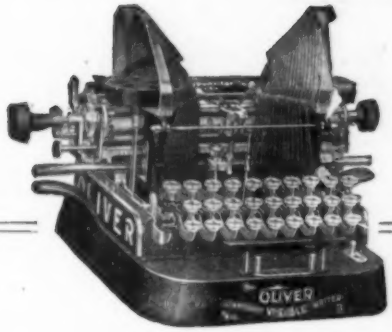

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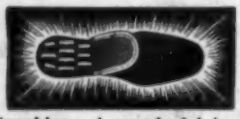

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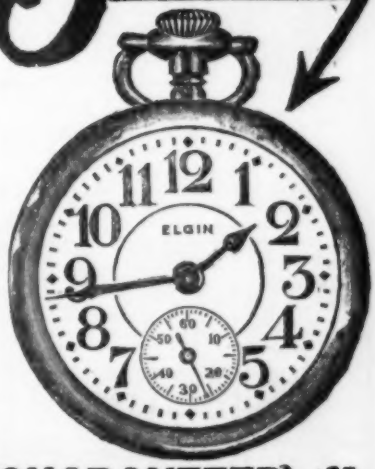

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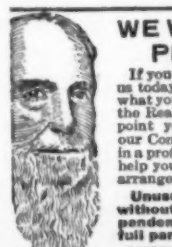

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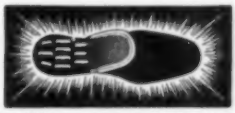

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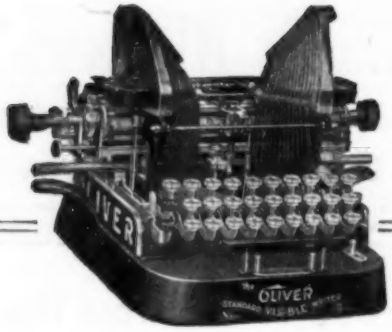

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October 1, 1912

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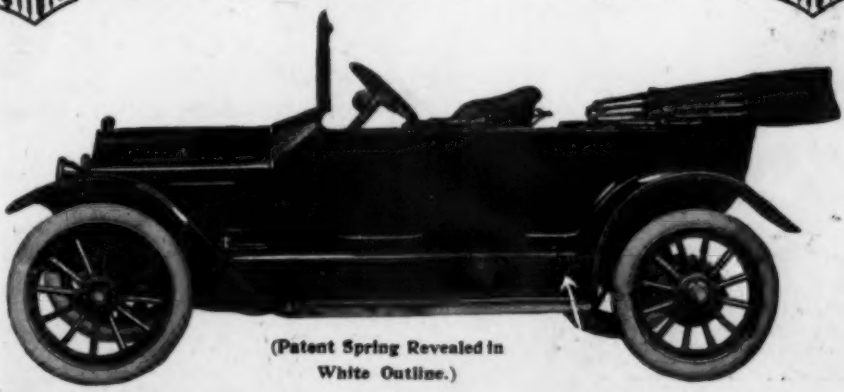

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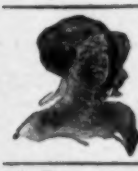

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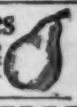

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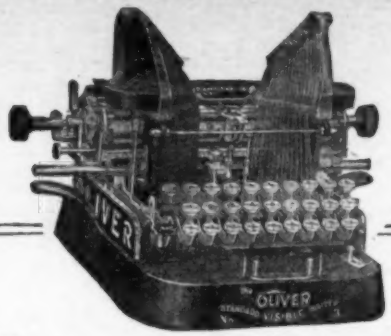

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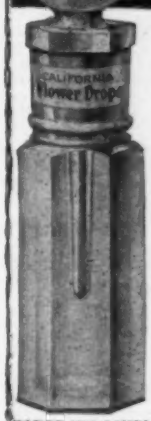

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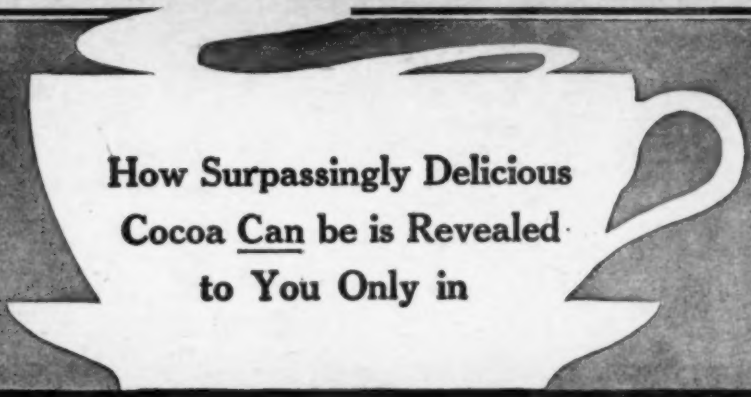

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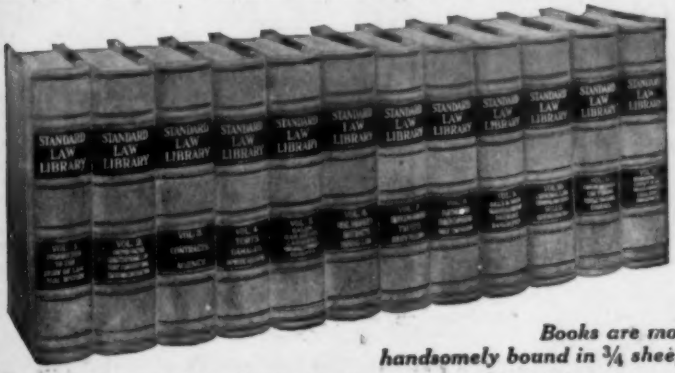

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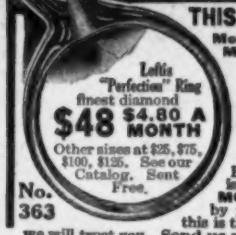

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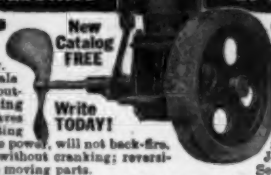

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DEEP BREATHING

By D. O. Harrell, M. D.

I BELIEVE we must all admit that deep breathing is a very desirable practice. Furthermore,we know it to be a fact that not one person in twenty, or perhaps one person in a hundred, really breathes deeply. Every physician can verify the statement that we are daily called upon to prescribe drugs for ailments that owe their cause directly to insufficient and improper breathing,—Oxygen Starvation.

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I might continue indefinitely to cite examples of the great physiological value of deep breathing. For instance, it is a well-known fact that intense mental concentration and nerve strain paralyze the diaphragm, the great breathing muscle. This depressing condition can be entirely counteracted through conscious deep breathing.

The main benefit of physical exercise lies in the activity it gives the lungs. What we term "lack of healthful exercise," in reality means insufficient lung exercise. Since few persons have the strength and endurance to exercise violently enough to stir the lungs into rapid action, common sense dictates that the lungs should be exercised independently, through conscious breathing. Exercise that fails to excite vigorous lung action is of little real value.

Unfortunately, few persons have the slightest conception of what is really meant by deep breathing. In fact, few physicians thoroughly understand the act. Ask a dozen different physical instructors to define deep breathing, and you will receive a dozen different answers. One tells you it means the full expansion of the chest, another tells you it means abdominal breathing, the third declares it means diaphragmatic breathing, and so on. In the end, one becomes thoroughly confused, and justly forms the opinion that most teachers of physical culture are incompetent to teach deep breathing.

Recently there has been brought to my notice a brochure on this important subject of respiration, that to my knowledge for the first time really treats the subject in a thoroughly scientific and practical manner. I refer to the booklet entitled, "Deep Breathing," by Paul Von Boeckmann, R. S. In this treatise, the author describes proper breathing, so that even the most uninformed layman can get a correct idea of the act. The booklet contains a mass of common sense teachings on the subject of Deep Breathing, Exercise and Body Building. The author has had the courage to think for himself, and to expose the weaknesses in our modern systems of physical culture.

I believe this booklet gives us the real key to constitutional strength. It shows us plainly the danger of excessive exercise, that is, the danger of developing the external body at the expense of the internal body. The author's arguments are so logical it is self-evident that his theories must be based upon vast experience. Personally, I know that his teachings are most profoundly scientific and thoroughly practical, for I have had occasion to see them tested in a number of my patients.

The booklet to which I refer can be had upon payment of ten cents in coin or stamps by addressing Dr. Von Boeckmann directly at 1965 World's Tower, 110 W. 40th Street, New York. The simple exercises he describes therein are in themselves well worth ten times the small price demanded.—Adv.

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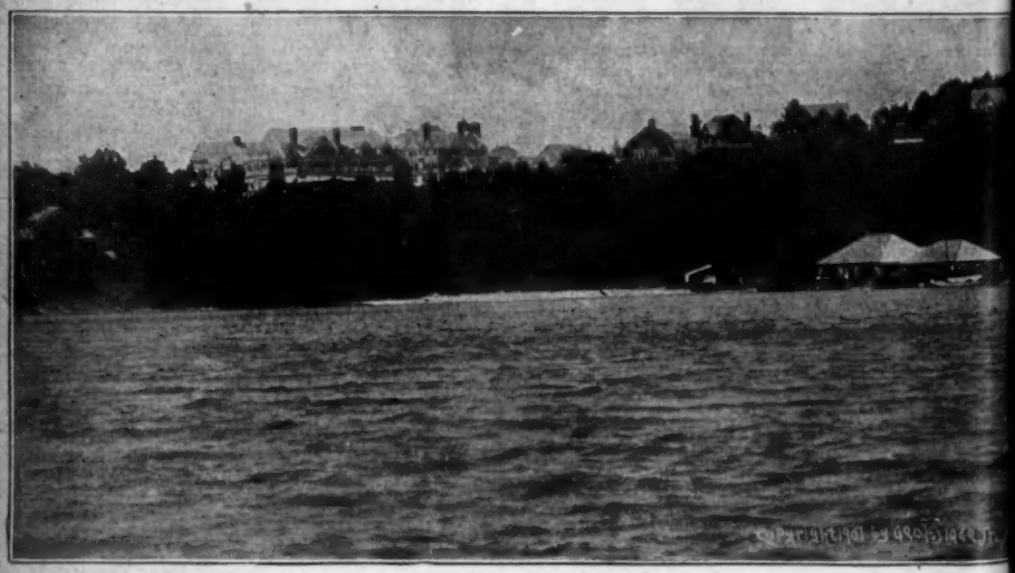

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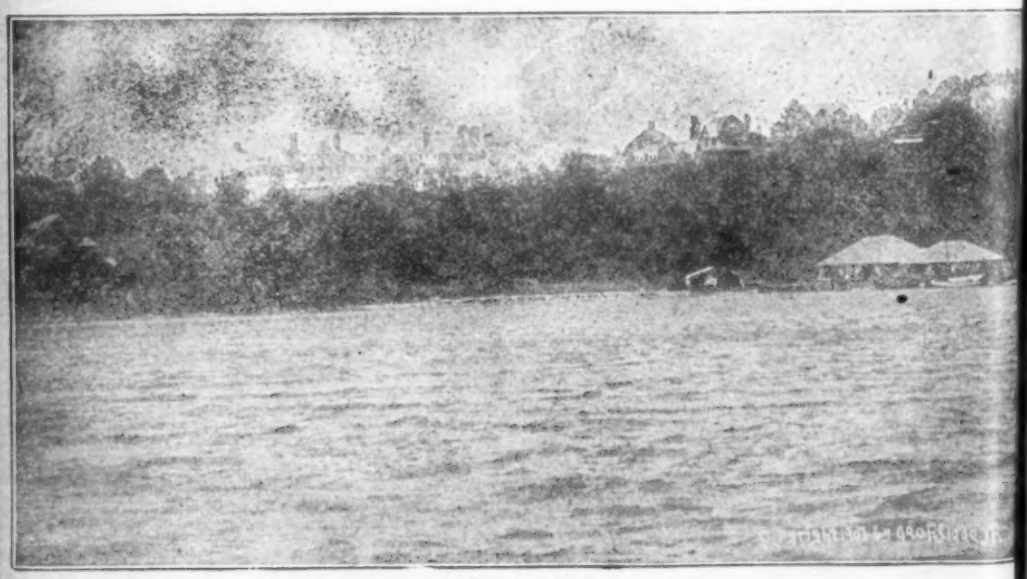
Managing Editor.



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